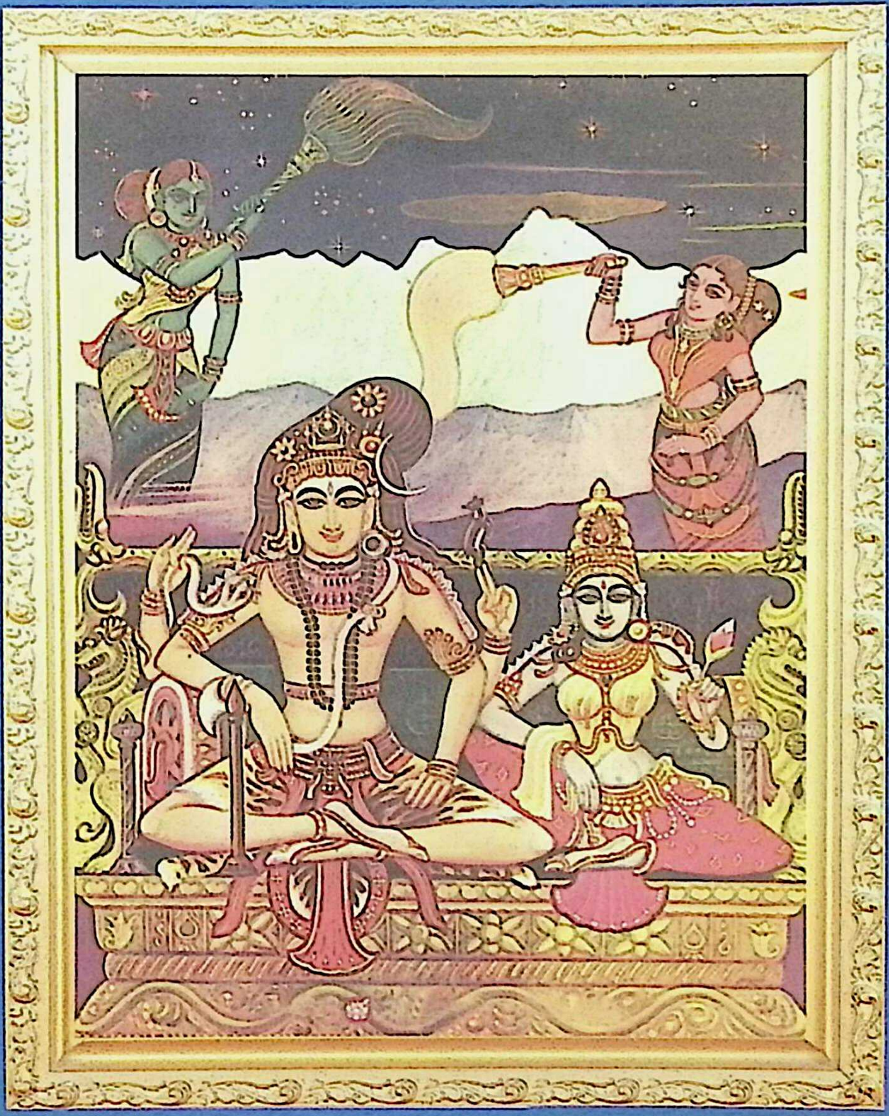
Meykanta Sastra
The Unmai Vilakkam



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Publisher's Note

The Unmai Vilakkam is the basic text of Saiva Siddhanta. Its author, St. Manavaachakam Kadantaar is a direct disciple of St. Meykandaar. Manavaachakam Kadantaan is the very name of Lord Siva. It is by this name St. Maanickavaachakar hails Him in his Tiruvaachakam.

A scholar desirous of cultivating Saiva Siddhanta must begin with the beginning. A few preparatory books such as Siddhanta-k-Kattalai, Sivappirakaasa-k-Kattalai, Tattuva-k-Kattalai and Tukalarubhota-k-Kattalai must first be mastered. These works, small in size but great in spiritual wisdom, are meant to help the beginner. Equipped with a fair knowledge from these tiny-great works, the aspirant can open the work: 'Unmai Vilakkam' (Explication of Truth).

There are two English translations of this work. The late-lamented J.M. Nallaswami Pillai's translation appeared in 1929. It is rather unfortunate that Pillai could not find time to furnish notes and explanation to his translation. Siva Sri C.N. Singaravelu's translation was serialised in 'Saiva Siddhanta'--a quarterly in English, published by the Saiva Siddhanta Maha Samajam. It was later published in a book-form. This was also re-printed in South Africa.

During his third visit to London (2002) Dr. T.N. Ramachandran conducted a crash-course on Saiva Siddhantam in Eastham, under the auspices of the Saiva Munnetra Sangam, London. The Unmai Vilakkam formed the content of this course. It was well received by the Sri Lankan Saivites, in particular, by the younger ones. His lectures constitute this volume.

One need not draw the long bow to emphasise the importance of the Unmai Vilakkam. Its very opening verse is surcharged with singular significance. The author addresses his guru (St. Meykandaar) as ' the one that could point at the false, make possible its removal and point at

the true or the real of the nature of Wisdom and Bliss.' There can be no beatitude greater than this.

Dr. T.N.R. has translated eleven out of the fourteen Meykanda Sastras. He is a full-time servitor of Tamil Saivism. In due appreciation of his service, the University of Jaffna conferred on him the degree: 'Doctor of Letters' in 2001. Tamil Nadu, we are sad to say, is yet to honour him properly, though he is not in need of it. He is in the good books of His Holiness, the twenty-sixth Pontiff of Dharmapuram Aadheenam. He is since 1987, the Honorary Director of the International Institute of Saiva Siddhanta Research, founded and funded by His Holiness. It is through this Institute, his translation of St. Appar's 'Tirumurai the Sixth' appeared in 1995. The International Institute of Tamil Studies, Chennai, published his translation of the Tiruvaachakam in 2001. Within fifteen months, the Institute has sold all the copies. This is proof positive of Dr. T.N.R.'s incontestable excellence as a translator.

This volume forms part of the work: 'A Vade-mecum of Tamil Saivism' to be published in London, this month.

We are happy to announce that we are also publishing Dr. T.N.R's translation of the Twin Sastras, namely the Tiruvuntiyaar and the Tirukkalitruppatiyaar. In the not-distant future we will be publishing his translation of the 'Irupaa Irupahtu' the understanding of which will be the guerdon of consummate knowledge of Saiva Siddhanta.

The sun shines. It is upto you to make hay.

"We are not left with much time; give up wrath
And the malady of passion. With a strong throng
Be minded to travel to the feet of the Lord-Owner.
Before the bejewelled doors of Sivapuram
Be shut to us, let us reach it and thither,
In melting love, hail the eulogia of Him
Whose jewels are snakes and who rules us."

(- St. Maanickavaachakar)

Sandhya Natarajan

MEYKANTA SASTRA –
THE UNMAI VILAKKAM

Unmai Vilakkam
(Tattva Prakaasam / The Explication of Truth)

The Work and its Author

Unmai Vilakkam means: The Explication of Truth. The Sanskrit word *Tattva* is the equivalent of the Tamil word *Unmai*. *Vilakkam* is *Prakaasam* in Sanskrit. *Tattva Prakaasam* means *Unmai Vilakkam*. Unmai is the equivalent of Truth in English. That alone is Truth which is eternal. Saiva Siddhantam posits three eternal categories, they being PATI the Lord-God, Pasu the soul(s) and Paasam comprising the three *malas* namely Aanavam, Mayai and Kanmam. These constitute the themes of Unmai Vilakkam. Besides these, the work also deals with many sub-themes. In all, this work comprises fifty three verses. The first verse is invocatory. Lord Vinaayakaa is the deity invoked here. This work is one of the fourteen '*Meikanda Sastras*' which are known as Saiva Siddhanta Sastras.

The second verse constitutes Guru-Worship. Guru means: Remover of Darkness. Darkness is Ignorance. It is produced by Aanava Mala. Only Siva can remove this from the soul. The removal is done by Siva-Guru. The Guru is the Saviour, the Bestower of Godly knowledge and everlasting Bliss. He is the sole Refuge of the soul.

St.Manavaachakam Kadantaar is the author of this opus which is, truly speaking, the Primer and vade-mecum of Saiva Siddhanta. Manavaachakam Kadantaar means: "He who has transcended manam and speech." Manam is an aspect of the inner sensorium (Antakkaranam).

The author is one of the fortynine chelas of St.Meikandaar. This opus places before the Guru a catena of

questions and implores the Guru to bless the seeker with clarification. In the third verse are couched the doubts in the form of questions. The other verses of this opus contain the illuminating answers to the questions. So, it is St.Meikantaar who is to be deemed as the real author of this work. St.Manavaachakam Kadantaar, it appears, has played the role of a loyal and dutiful amanuensis.

The name 'Manavaachakam Kadantaar' is significant. It is the very name of Lord Siva. It is by this hallowed name, St.Maanickavaachakar hails Lord-Siva. We can safely affirm that the disciple was so christened by St.Meikandaar. Even though he was one of the direct disciples of St.Meikandaar, he is not one of the four Santaana Kuravas who are St.Meikandaar, St. Arulnandi, St.Maraignaana Sambandhar and St.Umapati. This non-inclusion does not in any way detract from the glory of St.Manavaachakam Kadantaar. His indeed is the basic work – the Primer of Saiva Siddhantam. It serves as the master-key of all the other Sastras. This opus is an authoritative exposition of the Aagamic Saivism which is Saiva Siddhantam, also known as Tamil Saivism. Unimpeachability, simplicity, clarity and readability characterize this unique opus. A proper cultivation of this work will stand the student in good stead.

St.Manavaachakam Kadantaar hails from Tiruvatikai. He flourished during the ~~thirteenth~~ century.

The work in a Nut-shell

Questions	Answers
1. The first question relates to tattvas.	1. Verses 4 to 21: 18 verses
2. The second and the third questions relate to Aanava and Kanma malas.	2. Verse 22

3.	The fourth question relates to soul/self/life.	3.	Verses 24 to 26: 3 verses
4.	The fifth question relates to God.	4.	Verses 27 to 29: 3 verses
5.	The sixth question relates to the Dance of Siva.	5.	Verses 31 to 38: 8 verses
6.	The seventh question relates to the Panchaakshara.	6.	Verses 40 to 44: 5 verses
7.	The eighth question relates to Moksha/The Bliss of Deliverance.	7.	Verses 45 to 48 and 50 to 52: 7 verses

The first verse invokes Lord Vinaayaka.
The second invokes the Guru and implores him to listen to the doubts of the disciple.
The third serialises the questions.
The fourth reveals the consent of the guru who deigns to enlighten the disciple.
Verses 5 to 23 contain the Guru's answers.
Verse 24 deals with further questioning.
Verses 25 to 30 contain the Guru's answers.
Verse 31 deals with still further questioning.
Verses 32 to 49 contain the Guru's answers.
Verse 50 deals with the final question.
verses 51 to 53 contain the Guru's answers.
Verse 54 deals with the Chela's thanksgiving.

Vinaayakar Vanakkam

வண்மைதரும் ஆகமநூல் வைத்தபொருள் வழுவா
உண்மை விளக்கம் உரைசெய்யத் – திண்மதம் சேர்

அந்திநிறத் தந்திமுகத் தொந்திவயிற்று ஐங்கரனைப்
பந்தம் அறப் புந்தியுள் வைப்பாம். – 1

Obeisance to Lord Vinaayaka

To indite Unmai Vilakkam without detracting from
The Aagamas which treasure the message of Deliverance,
We will, to set at nought bondage, embosom Him
Whose face is like a tusker's whence flows strong must,
Whose hue is like the evening sky, whose belly is
Like a pot and whose hands are a pentad. - 1

Lord Vinaayaka removes all obstacles and averruncates all contretemps when invoked. He is Lord Siva in His filial form. In all forms of worship as well as ritual, it is Vinaayaka who is first invoked. The author who is a chela of St.Meikandaar follows his Guru in his footsteps and invokes Vinaayaka to crown his work with success.

பொய்காட்டிப் பொய்யகற்றிப் போதானந்தப் பொருளாம்
மெய்காட்டும் மெய்கண்டாய் விண்ணப்பம் – பொய்காட்டா
மெய்யா திருவெண்ணெ வித்தகா சுத்தவினா
ஐயா நீ தான் கேட்டருள். – 2

You revealed to me the nature of falsity and did away
With it. O Meikandaa who reveals Truth (Sat) which is
The Bliss of Gnosis! O Adept of Tiruvennainallur who is
Truth-incarnate and who annuls falsity! This is
My submission. O Sire, hearken, in grace, to my questions
The solution of which leads to the state of perfection. - 2

Before one essays to overcome falsity, one should be able to identify it. One cannot do it, all by oneself. One needs an enlightened guide in this connection. The guru indeed is the greatest guide. He is truly a Deus ex machina.

St.Meikandaar is the guru par excellence. His very name means: "He who has envisioned the Truth." He is therefore the most competent one to guide the disciple. The ultimate Truth is to be apprehended by Gnosis only. One can come by Godly knowledge only through a Guru who has realized Godliness. St.Meikandaar can, with ease, help the chela to identify falsity which is, forever, misleading.

The word 'poi' occurring in the above verse refers to Paasam. Like Pati and Pasu, Paasam is also sempiternal. In its causal state, it is eternal. However, as effect, it is not eternal. Its manifestations are therefore not real. They are pseudo and are void of value. They will have to be ignored and set at nought. This can be achieved only with the aid of a true guide. St.Meikandaar is such a guide. The chela, therefore, with utmost respect; beseeches his Guru. The word 'arul' occurring in the above verse is fraught with significance. Arul is Grace. Truly speaking St.Meikandaar is Grace in human form.

ஆறாறு தத்துவம் ஏது? ஆணவம் ஏது? அன்றேதான்
மாறா வினை ஏது? மற்றிவற்றின் – வேறாகா
நான் ஏது? நீ ஏது? நாதன் நடம் அஞ்செழுத்துத்
தான் ஏது? தேசிகனே சாற்று. – 3

What are tattvas six times six? What is Aanava
Which is beginningless? What is Karma which follows it
Without break? Who am I appearing non-different
From these? Who are you? What is the Dance
Of the Lord-Master? What indeed is the mystic
Pentad of letters? What is Moksha? O great Guru!
Unravel these to me. - 3

Eight are the questions addressed to the guru. These relate to the three eternal categories. Nothing remains outside

the pale of these categories. The key to the understanding of these is furnished by the tattvas. Indian faiths are built on the tattvas. Other faiths speak of lesser number of tattvas. It is Saiva Siddhanta which deals with all the thirty-six tattvas. There are sixty subordinate tattvas with which we are not now concerned. As other faiths have left out of account a few tattvas and as Saiva Siddhanta alone deals with all the thirty-six tattvas, Saiva Siddhanta alone presents a complete and perfect system based on reason, reasoning and logic.

All the tattvas are evolutes of Maya. Maya as posited by Saiva Siddhanta is different from the Maya of Sankara Bagawad Paada. That the tattvas evolved out of Maya are thirty-six in number, is affirmed by the Tirumantiram – an authoritative Saivite canonical work. It says: "Six times six are the number of tattvas for the good and great Saivites." The first question relates to these tattvas. A knowledge of these tattvas is a 'must' for the seeker after Truth.

The second question relates to Aanava malam. This malam co-exists beginninglessly with the soul. This is responsible for the ancestral blindness of the soul. It is a blemish. It is not the quality of the soul. This is well-nigh irremovable. It is Pati the Lord, who can nullify the denigrating effect of this malam. In the normal state one is not even aware of the existence of this malam. It is the Guru who helps the seeker to cognise, recognize and identify this malam. The words "Poi Kaattti poi akatri" occurring in the second verse are significant. The Guru causes the seeker to become alive to this malam which abides in his soul. Then, in his infinite mercy, he causes the removal of this malam from the seeker's soul. It is the grace of Guru which achieves this miracle. Thanks to him, the seeker extricates himself from the clutches of this malam.

The third question relates to Karma. Karma follows in the wake of Aanava mala. It is perpetuated without break. Karma is deed as well as its fruit (consequences). Even at the outset, Maha Muni Milton speaks of the fruit of the forbidden tree. The seeker should strictly follow the scripture. The do's and don'ts are enumerated in the scripture. The seeker should perform what he is commanded to do and refrain from committing deeds forbidden. Omissions are as important as commissions. The seeker should not commit what he is commanded to omit and vice versa. Wrong acts fetter the soul and restrict its freedom. Karma is the cause of bondage.

The fourth question is framed in this way. Who am I appearing non-different from these? The word 'these' refers to Aanava and Karma malas. The soul is fettered by Aanava mala and Karma commences in its wake. The soul erroneously identifies itself with the manifestation of Aanava and Karma malas. Rightly did Maha Kavi Bharati say:

ஆன்மா என்றே கருமத் தொடர்பை எண்ணி
அறிவு மயக்கம் கொண்டு கெடுகின்றீரே!
(You do wither befuddled, mistaking
the chain of action for soul!)

A seeker should know what he is. Gnothi seauton (Know thy self) is a commandment which is as old as the hills. If one does not know who one is, all learning one has come by is of no avail at all. One should not identify the accretions of soul with soul.

The fifth question relates to Siva Guru. He indeed is the Saviour. It is through him the seeker gains deliverance. Saiva Siddhantam affirms that the Guru is to be deemed Siva. On occasions, Siva Himself comes down in the form of a Guru. This condescension is of supreme importance. This

feature should not be lost sight of. St.Maanickavaachakar says:

அரு பரத்து ஒருவன் அவனியில் வந்து
குருபரன் ஆகி, அருளிய பெருமையை,
சிறுமை என்று இகழாதே . . .
(Never do they dis-esteem the grace bestowed
By the supernal One who as Guru came down
On earth ...)

In many instances the guru is only a human being. However he stands divinely animated by Lord-Siva, the Indweller. The soul can gain its goal only through the guru.

The sixth question relates to the Dance of the Lord-Master. This dance is known as the Aananda Taandavam. It signifies the fivefold acts of Siva, they being creation, sustenance, absorption, concealment and conferment of Grace. The last is specifically referred to as an act of Grace. However it should be remembered that all the acts of Siva are wrought of Grace. The Sivagnaana-Siddhyaar says: "எக்கிரமத்தினாலும் இறை செயல் அருளே என்றும் ..." [Judged by whatever standard, the acts of God are for ever acts of Grace]. These acts are performed by Siva for the salvation of the soul.

The seventh question is about the Panchaakshara, the mystic pentad of letters. On initiation, the chela is entrusted with this maha-mantra by the guru and it is to be chanted as ordained. This sustains the soul on its onward march and forfends the fall of soul into phenomenality. This indeed is the mascot par excellence. The seeker should ever chant it. The devotee should never forget it. St. Sundarar says:

"நற்றவா உனை நான் மறக்கினும், சொல்லும் நா நமச்சிவாயவே"
[O One of great and grand *tapas*, even if I am forgetful
of You, my tongue will yet chant NA MA SI VA YA ...]

The eighth and final question relates to Deliverance (Moksha). It is indeed the very goal of soul. Pati is the Conferrer of moksha; pasu is the receiver. Paasam ever remains paasam blocking the pathway leading to moksha. The guru removes this well-nigh irremovable barricade and helps the seeker to travel on the highway leading to moksha.

The guru is well pleased with his chela who submissively plied him with an octad of germane questions. He feels that his alumnus is fit to receive the spiritual instruction sought by him. He says:

> உள்ளபடி இத்தை உரைக்கக் கேள் உன்தனக்கு
> வள்ளல் அருளால் அன்று வாய்மலர்ந்த – தெள்ளியசீர்
> ஆகமங்கள் சொன்ன அடைவிலே ஆனந்த
> யோகம் நிகழ் புதல்வா உற்று. – 4

> O son poised in true Yoga! Of yore, Siva –
> The Munificent –, with His flowery lips and in grace,
> Explicated the Aagamas abounding in
> Salvific clarity; I will teach them to you
> In strict conformity; listen to it as truly expounded. - 4

The chela is here deemed a son of the guru. Indeed the disciple is the spiritual son of the guru. In this instance, the chela is described as one who is poised in true yoga. In Saiva Siddhantam *tapas* is related to charya, kriya, yoga and gnaana. The seeker is found to be competent to receive the spiritual instruction. Hence the readiness and willingness of the guru to impart it.

The instruction of the guru is in accordance with the Aagamas. Of the two types of Revelations, the Vedas are general in nature. The Aagamas are especial Revelations. It is Siva Himself who made known the Aagamas for the welfare

of mankind. So, any explication should be strictly in conformity with the Aagamas. The listener should hear the explication with utmost concentration and single-minded devotion. He must tune in properly and apprehend the message with a thousand antennae. Here is an opportunity with which the seeker is blessed, perhaps, only once.

In a few of the ensuing verses, the thirty-six tattvas are briefly explained. As the chela was already well-versed in the basics, a brief explication was sufficient for him. For a student of the 21st century the explanation offered would prove to be inadequate. So, a somewhat detailed exposition is necessary.

Any product in the world is seen to be made up of parts. These parts combine to create a product. We know that a car is made up of parts. So too, a house or furniture. It is by parts a product is formed. The world itself is a product of the five physical elements, they being earth, water, fire, wind and space. The ancient Tamil work says:

நிலம் நீர் தீ வளி வெளி என்ற ஐந்தின்
மயக்கு இவ்வுலகு.

Things beheld in the world are legion. They form part of the world. These parts constitute the world. The insentient (jada) parts which are part of the world can be classified under two categories. Bodies and limbs of embodied lives are jada and they come under the first category. Other objects of jada such as earth, water etc., and things wrought of these belong to the second category. In the first category we meet with the bodies of men as well as women. Deeming these to be two distinct categories, we have in all three. The three are (1) the bodies and limbs of men, (2) women and (3) things other than these. The embodied person, if a male, is called he,

if a female, she. All other things can be referred to as it. The world is made up of these three. So, St.Meikandaar refers to the world as made up of 'he, she and it'. அவன் அவள் அது எனும் அவை (The world is an assemblage of he, she and it) are the words of St.Meikandaar. The world is a product and is made up of the things referred to above. It is to be noted here that life is not included in any of these categories. In Saiva Siddhanta soul, inter alia, is also referred to as life.

It is well known that a product is made out of a material. A jewel is made out of gold. A table is made out of wood. The source material is known as the causa materialis (material cause). That indeed is the material cause from which a product is wrought. The making of product requires other causes too. The potter uses a wheel and a stick to make a pot. However no pot can be made without clay. Clay is the material cause. The wheel and the stick are the instrumental causes. The potter is the efficient cause. These three causes are respectively known as mutal, tunai and nimittha kaaranangkall.

MAYA

The world does have a material cause. It is known as MAYA. Maya is subtle and invisible. It is out of Maya all things are evolved. Bodies, bodily instruments and worlds are evolved out of Maya. It is Maya which makes possible human experience. Maya is subtle, but its products are gross. Many things are gradually evolved out of Maya in succession. As products from Maya are evolved they become grosser and grosser. Space too is a product of Maya. It is gross, though invisible. It, no doubt, is subtle. However, compared with Maya, it is gross. Maya eventually absorbs all of its products. It gets absorbed by Sakti which is absorbed

by Sivam. This ultimate absorption is known as the grand Dissolution (Samhaaram / Odukkam).

Maya is nearly all-pervasive. Its pervasion is immeasurable. Its apparently limitless pervasion can be illustrated in the following way. The rays of the early sun enter a house through holes in the roof. In them can be seen many many motes (dust particles). The cosmos comprises many many billions of heavenly bodies which are like particles in space. All these are contained in Maya's pervasion. Peerless indeed is Maya's pervasion.

This Maya is classified as suddha (pure) and asuddha (impure). Suddha Maya is uncontaminated by Aanava malam. Assuddha Maya is not so. Maya is but one. It is treated as twofold on account of the absence or presence of Aanava mala in it. It is like Kunri mani (a seed) which is red in colour with a black patch on its top. Another example is the earth girt with the mandala of air. While the top portion is pure and lucid, the lower portion is tainted by smoke, dust etc. The higher portion holds the lower also. So too Suddha Maya, Asuddha Maya.

Suddha Maya is also known as Kutilai and Vintu. Asuddha Maya's alias is Mohini. Suddha Maya is never the cause of confusion as it is not tainted by Aanava malam. Asuddha Maya being tainted by Aanava malam causes befuddlement. Hence its name Mohini – that which charms and misleads.

There is yet another Maya which is called Prakruti Maya. So, Maya is threefold. Strictly speaking, Prakruti Maya is not a distinct Maya. It is but an effect of Asuddha Maya. Asuddha Maya, we said, causes confusion. Yet this

confusion is far less than the one caused by Prakruti Maya. This causes immense tohu-bohu. Like Suddha Maya holding Asuddha Maya, the latter holds Prakruti Maya. On the top is Suddha Maya which holds Asuddha Maya which in turn holds Prakruti Maya which is at the bottom.

It is from Prakruti Maya, the world in which we live, is evolved. So, it is imperative on our part to come by a correct picture of Prakruti Maya. Prakruti Maya is of the form of the three gunas, they being Saatvikam, Raajasam and Taamasam (Satvam, Rajas and Tamas).

Like fragrance abiding in a bud the three gunas abide subtly in Prakruti Maya. Truly speaking, that indeed is Prakruti Maya which is the subtle and unmanifested state of the three gunas. The word Prakruti means cause. It is indeed the cause of the three gunas. Prakruti is called Mula-*p-pakuti* in Tamil.

Aanma Tattvas

It is from Prakruti Maya, internal instruments which aid the soul, are evolved. These are collectively called Anta-k-Karanam (inner sensorium). These are four in number, they being Chittam, Buddhi, Aangkaaram and Manam. We will now trace their evolution. In the causal state of Prakruti the three gunas remain unmanifested. Then Prakruti reaches the stage when the three gunas manifest and are in equilibrium. In this state it is known as Guna Tattva. That which is the manifested state is Vyaktam; that which is the unmanifested state is Avyaktam. Prakruti is also known as Avyaktam. When Prakruti manifestes the three gunas and holds them in equilibrium, it is called Guna Tattva. Chittam which is an anta-k-karanam (inner instrument) is indeed this Guna-

Tattva. It is Chittam which provides the soul with an instrument to think.

From out of the Guna Tattva in which the three gunas are in equilibrium, emerges buddhi. In buddhi, saatvikam predominates over the other two gunas.

When we say that something emerges from something else, it also refers to transformation. It may be asked, if Guna Tattva transforms into buddhi, how does Guna Tattva remain after such transformation? The answer is as follows. Transformation is of two kinds. One is total and the other is partial. When milk turns into curds, it is total transformation. When butter is kept for a long time, from a portion of it a worm may emerge. This is known as partial transformation. When a portion gets transformed, the other part may remain untransformed. Buddhi Tattva continues to remain so, even though a modicum has undergone transformation. This applies to the other tattvas also.

When the three gunas are totally unmanifested, it is Prakruti. When the manifested gunas three are in equilibrium, it is Guna Tattva. Then comes a state when saatvikam predominates over the other two gunas and that is buddhi. In further emergences, one guna will appear predominant.

Saatvikam is generative of light, mildness, peace etc., Raajasam of violence, skilful action, etc., and Taamasam of dullness, ignorance, delusion etc. Saatvikam is productive of joy, Raajasam of pain and Taamasam of confusion.

It is buddhi which helps the soul to come to a decision. Its judging quality is aided by the light afforded by Saatvikam.

From buddhi emerges Aangkaaram. In this Raajasam predominates. This helps the soul to will, to know and to act. It is the source of impetus. We will now see how this happens to be the source (cause) of tattvas which emerge henceforth.

By its very nature, Aangkaaram is threefold. They partake of the aspects of Saatvikam, Raajasam and Taamasam. Saatvika Aangkaaram is called Daisata Aangkaaram, Raajasa Aaangkaaram, Vaikaari Aaangkaaram and Taamasa Aaangkaaram, Bhutaati Aaangkaaram.

From Daisata Aaangkaaram emerges Manam. Note that manam is not to be equated with mind. Mind is consciousness. Not so manam. Manam apprehends external objects. Manam along with chittam, buddhi and Aaangkaaram forms the quartet called Anta-k-Karanam. We will learn more clearly of their operation from verse 17.

Gnaanendriyas

We will now study the appearance of the external instruments which are Gnaana and Karma indriyas. The internal instruments are Anta-k-Karanam.

Manam emerges from Daisata Aaangkaaram. After manam, from the self-same Aaangkaaram emerge the pentad of Gnaanendriyas. The loci of these are ears, skin, eyes, tongue and nose. It is in this order they manifest successively. These help the external senses of sound, touch, light, taste and smell to manifest. These are therefore called sense-organs. These help the soul to perceive objects. These are known as Gnaanendriyas (the five perceiving sense organs).

A doubt may arise whether Manam as well as Gnaanendriyas can spring from the same source. It is to be

remembered here that it is through the instrumentality of the Gnaanendriyas, the mind apprehends the external senses (objects). Manam is an internal instrument; yet when it emerges, it gets linked with the external instruments which are Gnaanendriyas. The outer senses apprehended by the Gnaanendriyas are taken hold of by manam which passes them onto buddhi. Poised as it were between the internal and external instruments, it operates with celerity and dexterity. Unlike the other internal instrument, manam has an ineluctable nexus with external instruments. Hence the origination of manam and the external instruments from one and the same source.

Though ears, skin, eyes, tongue and nose are given out as the Gnaanendriyas, these are not, truly speaking, Gnaanendriyas. These are their loci. There is in the ear a power which makes hearing possible. A similar power resides in the skin, eyes etc., which makes feeling, seeing, tasting and smelling possible. This power is indeed the indriya. When this power goes away the ears cannot hear, the skin cannot feel, the eyes cannot see, the tongue cannot taste and the nose cannot smell.

Kanmendriyas

After the advent of Manam and the Gnaanendriyas, appear the five Kanmendriyas. These emerge from Vaikaarika Aaangkaaran. The loci of these are mouth, legs, hands, excretory organs and genital organs. It is in this order they manifest successively. These are called Kanmendriyas (working instruments). They perform speaking, walking, giving and receiving, evacuation and enjoyment.

Even as the acts of giving and receiving are linked with hands, the movement of every limb is deemed to be

done by hands only. Stretching legs, flexing hands, waving head, knitting brows, winking, moving lips etc., are to be deemed the doings of hands.

Even though, in the main, anus is given out as the excretory organ, it also includes regions which exude waste matter. Passing urine and faeces, spitting, vomiting, blowing out the nose, perspiring etc., are to be deemed the doings of excretory organs.

What is said above of indriya, should be remembered when we speak of Kanmendriyas also.

Tanmaatras

Tanmaatras manifest from Bhutaati Aangkaaram. These are a pentad. They are Sound (Sabda), Touch, Feeling (Sparisa), Light (Rupa), Taste (Rasa) and Smell (Ganda). It is in this order they emerged successively. It is from these, the five respective Bhutas (Elements) emerged.

As the Bhutas emerge from the third type of Aangkaaram, it is called Bhutaati Aangkaaram. However they do not straightaway emerge from this Aangkaaram. The tanmaatras come into being first, and the Bhutas next.

Tanmaatras are subtle. Not so the Bhutas. Tanmaatras are called Sukshma (subtle) bhutas. Bhutas are called Sthula (physical) bhutas. They are also known as Maha bhutas (great elements). Normally, the word bhuta refers to the physical element.

The word tanmaatra means that which stands as it is. Here a word of explanation is necessary. We know not what sound simpliciter is. When we hear something it may be soft

or loud, sweet or harsh etc. It is by its softness, loudness, etc., that we hear a sound. It is by such traits we identify a sound. It is only by such special differences we cognise sound. We know not of undifferentiated sound. It is through its predominating quality that we come to know of it. Likewise the sense of touch becomes palpable when it is smooth or rough or sticky etc. Undifferential sense of touch is imperceivable.

Sound and the other four, in their true nature, cannot be experienced by us. In their true nature they stand as they are which is beyond the pale of our perception. In the next stage, they manifest as bhutas. When they so manifest, their virtues (qualities) stand attached to the bhutas. These also become the virtues (qualities) of the bhutas. These qualities also go by the names sound, touch, light, taste and smell. In such a state they can be apprehended by the Kanmendriyas. Now they are designated as *pulan* (sensible object).

Since both tanmaatras and *pulan*-s go by the same nomenclature, we should be alive to their differences. Tanmaatras are subtle and they emerge as gunas. They are the material cause of the five elements, and are tattvas. Pulan-s are not tattvas. They are the qualities of the bhutas. They are known as *taatvikas*. Tanmaatras operate on the cosmic level and pulan's operation is restricted to the individual's level.

Bhutas

Bhutas emerge from tanmaatras. From Sabda (sound), emerges Aakaash (Space), from Sparisa (Touch), Vaayu (Wind), from Rupa (Rupam), Agni (Fire); from Rasa (Rasam, Neer, Water) and from Ganda (Gandam) Pritivi (Earth).

The nature of cause pervades the effect too. A bhuta contains the virtue of the tanmaatra from which it emerges. So, sound is the characteristic of aakaash, touch of wind, form of fire, taste of water and smell of earth.

In sabda tanmaatra abides sound only; in sparisa tanmaatra abide sound and touch; in rupa tanmaatra sound, touch as well as form; in rasa tanmaatra sound, touch, form and taste; in ganda tanmaatra sound, touch, form, taste and smell.

Both Vedantam and Saiva Siddhantam affirm that the elements are endowed with their respective virtues. Vedantam goes a step further and discusses the distribution of such virtues among the elements.

Aakaayam (Aakaash/Space/Ether) is the base which supports everything. Vaayu (Wind) like space partakes of pervasion. Its virtue is motion. Teyu (Agni/Fire) is endowed with Rupam (Form) and it also has, in a measure, the virtues of Space and Wind. Appu (Water) is endowed with taste (relish), and in a measure has the virtues of Space, Wind and Fire. Pritivi (Earth) has, in a measure, the above four virtues and its especial virtue Gandam (Smell). Referring to Lord Siva in Potritthiruvakaval St.Maanickavaachakar says:

"You pervade the earth and endue it with virtues five, praise be!
The water with virtues four, praise be!
The fire with virtues three, praise be!
The air with virtues two, praise be!
The ether with a single virtue, praise be!"

Apart from the virtues with which a bhuta is endowed, they have other qualities also. This is explicated by verse 10.

The world and the various objects seen therein are the products of the elements. These are all insensible (jada). These evolved out of Bhutaati Aangkaaram. The world which eventually evolved out of this Aangkaaram is jada like its cause (source).

Maya

Maya forming part of the Vidya Tattvas is Asuddha Maya. Maya is threefold. This we have discussed earlier. Suddha Maya is also known as Maamaya, Kutilai, Kundalini and Vintu (Skt. Bhindu). From Suddha Maya emerges Sudda-Prapancham. Prapancham is world. Suddha prapancham comprises Sabda and Artha Prapanchas. Sabda Prapancha is made up of the fourfold Vaak (Sound), namely Vaikari, Madyama, Paisanti and Sukshma. Artha Prapancha comprises the five Kalaa-s namely Nivrutti, Pratishta, Vidya, Saanti and Saanti Atheeta Kalaa-s and also the five Siva Tattvas.

Suddha Maya is pure Maya. It is free from the contamination of Aanava and Karma malas. It is the source of perpetual joy. Siva directly acts on Suddha Maya. By His order, Ananta Deva and Srikanta Deva act on Asuddha Maya.

Asuddha Maya has many names. One of them is Mohini. Though this is listed as the seventh tattva in the Vidya tattvas, it is indeed the cause of the Asuddha Prapancham in which are included Vidya and Aanma tattvas.

Asuddha Maya is real, formless, inert, eternal and subtle in its causal state. It is the support of Karma.

Prakruti Maya, as observed earlier, is but an effect of Asuddha Maya. It is an evolute of Kalaa. It is also referred to as Mula Prakruti, Pradaanam and Maan.

The following table which presents Prakruti Maya and its evolutes, should be etched in the mind of the student of Saiva Siddhanta.

Asuddha Maya

1. Maya (Maya Tattva)
   - Kaalam 2
   - Niyati 3
   - Kalai 4
     - Prakruti
     - Vidya 5
       - Araagam 6
   - Purusha 7

Prakruti Maya

1. Guna Tattva (Cittam)
2. Buddhi
3. Aangkaaram
   - Saatvika Aspect (Daisatam)
   - Raajasa Aspect (Vaikaarikam)
   - Taamasa Aspect (Bhutaati)

4.Manam 5. Ears 6. Skin 7. Eyes 8. Tongue 9. Nose — Gnanendriyas

10. Mouth 11. Legs 12. Hands 13. Anus 14. Genitals — Kanmendriyas

Tanmaatras

Sabda	Sparisa	Rupa	Rasa	Ganda
15	16	17	18	19
Aakash	Wind	Fire	Water	Earth
20	21	22	23	24

The Physical elements

The twenty-four tattvas indicated in the table are known as Prakruti Maya tattvas. This Maya first operates as a tattva and then becomes the functioning world. The tree does not straight grow from the seed. It first emerges as a germinating sprout. Likewise from Prakruti Maya emerges first the subtle material of tattvas and then the world appears as an effect.

It is clear that the four Anta-k-kaaranam, the five Gnaanendriyas and the five Kanmendriyas (totalling fourteen in number) operate as soul's sense-instruments as well as working instruments. How do the five tanmaatras and the five physical elements help the soul? Tanmaatras provide the field of operation for Gnaanendriya and Kanmendriyas and help them to associate themselves with them to perform their work. The bhutas assist Gnaana and Kanma indriyas and augment their skill. It is thus the soul gets helped by these. Verses 12 to 15 furnish us with the details of their workings.

Taatvikas

The effects and evolutes of tattvas are known as taattvikas. Daisata, Vaikaarika and Bhutaati are divisions (aspects) of Aangkaaram. These are taattivikas and are therefore not reckoned as tattvas. The multitudinous forms of bodies, their internal and external organs are the evolutes of Maya. They are all therefore taatvikas. Again the world in which we live and the various things which are objects of experience are also taatvikas.

These tattvas and taatvikas can be described as fourfold, they being tanu (body), karanam (bodily instruments), bhuvanam (the world formed for the operation of bodies) and bhogam (objects of experience).

Thus Prakruti Maya manifests as twenty-four tattvas which associate with the soul and help it undergo experience. It is well known that which is in the cause will also be found in the effect. The primal cause Prakruti is made up of the three gunas. So, its products, namely tanu, karanam, bhuvanam and bhogam partake of the nature of the three gunas. Soul which is associated with these, is pervaded by the three gunas and undergoes feelings of joy, misery and confusion. Prakruti by its different gunas charms and confuses the soul in many different ways.

All the twenty-four tattvas are the means for soul's experience. They also constitute experience. So, the cluster of these twenty-four tattvas goes by the name Bhogya Kaandam. Bhogyam means that which is experienced. Kaandam means assemblage.

The forms of the five elements

நாற்கோணம் பூமி; புனல் நண்ணுமதியின் பாதி;
ஏற்கும் அனல் முக்கோணம்; எப்போதும் – ஆர்க்கும்
அறுகோணம் கால்; வட்டம் ஆகாயம்; ஆன்மா
உறு காயம் ஆம் இவற்றால் உற்று. – 5

In shape the earth is square-like; Water is
Like a half-moon; consuming fire is triangular;
The ever-moving air is hexagonal; space is circular;
Soul gets a body composed of these. - 5

The shapes of the elements spoken of here are mentioned as such in the Aagamas. These shapes can be apprehended only through yogic vision. Each element is endowed with a particular shape, hue, letter, deity and quality. It is of the five elements the soul's body is compact. We have already referred to the dictum of the Tolkaappiyam which speaks of this truth.

The shapes referred to here are not the forms of the gross elements, namely earth, water etc. It is of the five tattvas of the elements, the above verse speaks.

The physical body is composed of a particular combination of the five elements. Flesh, hair, skin, nerves are of Pritivi. Urine, blood, sweat etc., are of Appu (Water), The fire of hunger, the bodily heat etc., are of Teyu (Fire). Vital air and the like are of Vayu (Wind). The ten *naadis* are of Aakaash (Space).

That the subtle elements have forms is an ancient concept. According to Aristotle, all substances were made of a primary matter called hyle. The name for form is *eidos*. He

also opined that the elements are really the fundamental properties of matter.

The hues and root-letters of the elements:

பொன்பார்; புனல்வெண்மை; பொங்கும் அனல் சிவப்பு;
வன்கால் கருமை; வளர் வான் தூமம்; – என்பார்
எழுத்து லவரய அ பாராதிக்கு என்றும்
அழுத்தமாய் நிற்கும் அது. – 6

Earth in colour is auric; water is white;
Blazing fire is red; mighty wind is black;
The ever-expanding space is of the colour of smoke.
Thus it is stated. For ever firmly fixed to them –
The earth and other elements –, are the root-letters
La, Va, Ra, Ya and Ha. - 6

The following table is self-explanatory.

Name of the element	Colour	Root-letter
Earth	Golden	La
Water	White	Va
Fire	Red	Ra
Wind	Black	Ya
Space	Smoky	Ha

The term *bija-akshara* is translated as root-letter. For everything there is a source-sound. This source/seed is its genesis. Each root-letter is a mantra. The source-sounds manifest from Suddha-Maya. Grace has these as its locus and poised there, it operates the five elements. So it is said that the source-sounds ply the world.

The symbols of the elements

குறி குலிசம் கோகனதம் கொள்சுவத்தி குன்றா
அறு புள்ளி ஆரமுத விந்து – பிறிவின்றி
மண் புனல் தீக்கால் வானம் மன்னும் அடைவே என்று
ஒண் புதல்வா! ஆகமம் ஓதும். – 7

Earth: Vajra. Water : Lotus. Fire : Swastika.
Wind: Six dots. Aakaash: Amruta bindu.

O glorious son! The Aagamas affirm thus:
The symbols of earth is Vajraayutam, of water Lotus;
Of fire Swastika, of air Six dots and of space
Amruta-bindu which is a droplet of nectar.

Symbols play a vital role. We meet with them in the phenomenal as well as spiritual world. It is well known that the symbol par excellence, is Siva-linga. Symbols are a language by themselves. More often than not, they convey meanings which are truly ineffable. A contemplation of symbols will lead the soul to higher and still higher regions.

The presiding deities and their functions

பாராதி ஐந்துக்கும் பன்னும் அதிதெய்வங்கள்
ஆர் ஆர் அயன் ஆதி ஐவராம் – ஓரோர்
தொழில் அவர்க்குச் சொல்லுங்கால் தோற்ற முதல் ஐந்தும்
பழுதறவே பண்ணுவர்கள் பார். – 8

For the five elements beginning with earth
The presiding deities are Brahma and four others.
Their respective functions are five beginning with
Creation; behold! these they perform faultlessly. - 8

படைப்பன் அயன்; அளிப்பன் பங்கயக்கண் மாயன்;
துடைப்பன் உருத்திரனும்; சொல்லில் – திடப்பெறவே

என்றும் திரோபவிப்பர் ஈசர்; சதாசிவரும்
அன்றே அநுக்கிரகர் ஆம். – 9

Brahma evolves; the lotus-eyed Vishnu sustains;
Rudra resolves; to undergo experience Mahesa always conceals;
Sadaasiva, as of yore, grants grace.
It is said that they function thus, even thus. - 9

The following table is self-explanatory.

Name of the element	The presiding deity	His function
Earth	Brahma	Evolution/Creation
Water	Vishnu	Maintenance
Fire	Rudra	Absorption
Air	Mahesvara	Concealment
Space	Sadaasiva	Bestowal of grace

There are three states of the soul, they being kevala, sakala and suddha. In the kevala state the soul is without a body – sukshma or sthula (subtle or gross); in the sakala state it is embodied; and in the suddha state, it is bodilessly oned with God. In the kevala state, the soul is steeped in Aanava mala and is well-nigh without the ability to comprehend anything. It is shrouded in darkness which is total nescience. In the embodied state it is furnished with tanu, karanam, bhuvanam and bhogam. Truly speaking creation pertains to the ushering into existence of tanu, karanam etc.

For the salvation of soul, Pati – the Lord-God, enacts the three types of five-fold acts known as Panchakritya. These are called sukshma, ati sukshma and gross (sthula) panchakritya. The sukshma (subtle) panchakritya is performed for the benefit of the soul in its kevala state and

the ati-sukshma for the soul in its sakala state. The gross panchakritya relates to both pasu and paasam.

The first three acts of the panchakritya, namely creation, sustenance and absorption relate to paasam (inanimate matter). The other two acts namely concealment (obscuration) and bestowal of grace are done for the weal and welfare of soul. Sadaasiva is the bestower of grace. Sadaa Sivam is a state in which Siva and Sakti inhere in equal measure.

Creation

In Saiva Siddhanta hermeneutics, creation does not refer to creation of anything out of nothing. Ex. nihilo nihil fit (Nothing comes out of nothing). Creation is evolution. It may be asked: "Is evolution necessary at all?" The answer is, it is. Each thing has a pair of states. One is causal and the other is the state of effect. The seed is the cause. The plant or tree is the effect. The effect is contained in the cause. The unmanifested effect abides invisibly in the cause. A pot is an effect; its cause is clay.

Evolution causes to manifest the effect concealed in the cause. Tanu, karanam, bhuvanam and bhogam are effects. Their cause is Maya. Tanu, Karanam etc., are evolved out of Maya so that they may be connected with soul. It is thus the word creation is to be understood.

Sustenance

Embodied lives live in the world. With the help of their gnaana and karma indriyas they cognise the things of the world and make use of them. It is thus they experience karma. Sustenance is the act of guarding tanu, karanam etc., during their appointed time.

Resolution (Absorption)

In Sanskrit the word samhaaram refers to resolution. In Tamil it is called odukkam (absorption). This does not refer to destruction or annihilation. Resolution is the reduction of things in their state of effect to their causal state. This offers rest to the hitherto-unredeemed souls. Such rest is needed by the tired souls. Resolution (Dissolution) is done at various levels. Students require weekly holidays, minor as well as major vacations. It is to invigorate them that such rest is made available to them.

Evolution, sustenance and resolution are acts of God which are connected with and relate to Maya which is jada. God also undertakes the performance of two other acts namely concealment (obscuration) and bestowal of grace. These are enacted for the benefit of soul.

Concealment

This is performed by God to cause the soul to experience the fruits of its deeds. The soul must experience the results of its karma to get fit for salvation. If a patient needs a major operation, he is administered chloropharm. In this state he is unconscious of the pain of the operation when it is done. He cannot physically endure the pain of surgery when he is conscious. So a temporary unconsciousness has to be induced in him for his benefit. This obscuration which is beneficial in nature is needed for the benefit of the patient.

Concealment (Tirobhava) helps to gradually weaken the power of Aanava malam. The soul becomes ultimately fit for deliverance only when the power of Aanava malam stands nullified. Like the acts of resolution, obscuration also plays a vital role.

Bestowal of Grace

God eventually graces the soul with deliverance and steeps it for ever in bliss. Salvation is indeed the goal of soul. However this is not gained with ease. To come by this, soul undergoes many many embodied incarnations and gets chastened gradually. The soul does not make proper use of the opportunities afforded to it. Again and again it commits the same errors, mistakes and blunders. However experience points to the soul its faults, defaults, violations, deviations, lapses etc. Consequences of these din into souls salubrious lessons, thanks to which they progress steadily and become fit receptacles for receiving grace.

Verse 9 says Brahma and other gods perform creation etc. Truly speaking it is Lord Siva who does these acts through his agents (deputies). It is well known that the acts of the agents are the acts of the principal himself.

The virtues of bhutas and their functions

மண் கடின மாய்த் தரிக்கும்; வாரி குளிர்ந்தே பதமாம்;
ஒண் கனல் சுட்டு ஒன்றுவிக்கும்; ஓவாமல் – வண்கால்
பரந்து சலித்துத் திரட்டும்; பார்க்கில் ஆகாயம்
நிரந்தரமாய் நிற்கும் நிறைந்து. – 10

Earth is hard and supports; water is cool and softens;
Bright fire burns and reduces alike all things to ashes;
Mighty wind spreads, wafts and gathers things.
Truly speaking, space for ever abides and serves as base. - 10

Earth is hard; it bears all things – animate as well as inanimate. Water is cool and it softens things. Fire burns and reduces all things alike to ashes. It produces light as well as heat. Wind for ever blows. By its might, it scatters as well as gathers things. Space is ubiquitous. It pervades everything.

The following table is self-explanatory.

Name of the element	The guna (virtues)	Its function
Earth	Hardness	Support
Water	Coolth	Softening
Fire	Heat and light	Reduces everything to ashes
Wind	Movement	Scattering and gathering
Space	Pervasion	Universal pervasion

The five pulan-s

உள்ளபடி மாபூதம் ஓதினோம் உன்றனக்குக்
கள்ளமிகும் ஐம்புலனும் கட்டுரைக்கில் – மெள்ளவே
ஓசை பரிசம் உருவம் சுவை நாற்றம்
ஆசை தரும் ஐம்புலனே யாம். – *11*

Truly did we speak of the great bhutas to you;
Due exposition will reveal that the five furtive pulan-s
Are Sound, Touch, Form, Taste and Odour.
These five pulan-s but augment desire. - 11

The five physical elements in their subtle state are called tanmaatras. In other words, in their rudimentary and undifferentiated state they are tanmaatraas. In their differentiated state, they are called pulan-s. Pulan-s are in a gross state. Hoisington says that these tanmaatras "are imperceptible except to gods and to the illuminated sense of gnaani or wise man. Yet they are substantial, and from them the grosser elements are developed. They are the subjects or recipients of the archetypes of sound, tangibility, form, colour, flavour and odour – one of which is supposed to be present in every act of sensation. These archetypes are something more than mere qualities. They are a sort of

'corporeal effluvia' or 'exuvious images of bodies' as Empydocles and Democritus would call them."

According to Dr.A. Aanandarajan verse 11 speaks of pulan-s and not tanmaatras. Though the author of Unmai Vilakkam, in the context, should deal with tanmatras after his exposition of the physical elements, he had chosen to deal with pulan-s and not tanmaatras. This has resulted in some confusion for the commentators. Dr. Aanandarajaṇ furnishes a convincing explanation in this connection. The verse specifically refers to the five pulan-s twice and the epithets describing their nature are significant. The author describes the pulan-s as deceptive and as augmenting desire. Such descriptions will not square with the nature of tanmaatras.

Sound, touch etc., manifest as the virtues of the five elements and find their loci in ears, skin, etc. It is only then manam is able to apprehend them. Desire also gets augmented. They become objects cognised by the sense-instruments. Tanmaatras are not so cognisable. Neither do they foster desire.

It is good to remember that the tanmaatras are tattvas. The five pulan-s are not tanmaatras; they are taatvikas.

The technique pursued by St.Manavaachakam Kadantaaṛ is this. The unknown is to be explained through the known. We are familiar with the five pulan-s and their workings. Through the gross, he explains the subtle.

Gnaanendriyas

ஞானேந்திரியங்கள் நன்கு உரைக்கக் கேள்;
ஊனமிகு பூதம் உற்றிடமா – ஈனமாம்

சத்தாதியை அறியும்; தானம் செவி தோல் கண்
அத்தாலு மூக்கென்று அறி. – 12

Listen with care to the exposition of gnaanendriyas;
From their loci – the tanmaatras –, they cognise
Sound and the like; know that they also have their loci
In ears, body (skin), eyes, tongue and nose. - 12

The word indriya is untranslatable. Indriya is not the same as instrument (organ). The power that resides in a given instrument is indriya. One may have a beautiful pair of ears. Yet one may be tone-deaf. The power that resides in one's ears enables one to hear. When we say that gnaanendriyas are ears, skin etc., we should understand it to mean ear-indriya, skin-indriya and so on. Indriya is subtle and non-physical. It possesses the function implied. Gnaanendriyas are so called because they are the gateways leading to knowledge.

The word indriya is significant. As observed earlier, it is power residing in the sense-organ that enables the organ concerned to sense and function. The organs are the loci of the indriyas. It is also said that tanmaatras too are the loci of indriyas. How is this to be understood? Here, a word of illustrative explanation is necessary. A warrior rides a horse. The horse serves as his bearer. But then it is a truism to say that the horse runs on a path. So, the pathway also serves as a bearer for the rider. Tanmaatra is like the horse. The organ is like the road. For indriyas tanmaatras directly serve as the loci. Organs derive their loci through tanmaatras. The interconnections between tanmaatras, organs and indriyas are well brought out in verses 13 and 14.

Gnaanendriyas, Process of knowing

வான் இடமாய் நின்று செவி மன்னும் ஒலியதனை;
ஈனமிகும் தோல் கால் இடமாக - ஊனப்
பரிசம் தனை அறியும்; பார்வையின் கண் அங்கு
விரவி உருவங் காணும். - 13

The ear-indriya perceives sound through the medium
Of space; the skin-indriya perceives touch through
The medium of wind; the eye-indriya perceives form
(Light) through the medium of fire. - 13

நன்றாக நீர் இடமா நா இரதம் தான் அறியும்;
பொன்றா மணம் மூக்கு பூ இடமா - நின்று அறியும்
என்று ஓதும் அன்றே இறை ஆகமம்; இதனை
வென்றார் சென்றார் இன்ப வீடு. - 14

The tongue-indriya perceives well taste through
The medium of water; the nose-indriya perceives
Abiding smell through the medium of earth.
It is thus, the Aagamas authored by God, of yore, declare.
They that transcend these gain the bliss of deliverance. - 14

Verses 13 and 14 go together.

The bhutas are referred to as the loci of indriyas. Earlier we referred to tanmaatras as the loci of indriyas. Is there any inconsistency between these two dicta? The inconsistency is apparent and not real. An example will bring out the true meaning of the above verses. Tanmaatras are like the germinating sprout and the bhutas are the (developed) trees. This is the reason why tanmaatras are here referred to as bhutas. Again we have already made it clear that the author always explains the unknown through that which is

known. So space stands for sabda, wind sparisa, fire form, water relish and earth smell.

The following table is self-explanatory.

	Element	Indriya	Its locus	What it perceives
1.	Ether (Sabda)	Ear-indriyas	Ears	Sound
2.	Wind (Sparisam)	Body-indriya	Skin	Touch
3.	Fire (Rupam)	Eye-indriyas	Eyes	Form (light)
4.	Water (Rasam)	Tongue-indriya	Tongue	Taste
5.	Earth (Gandam)	Nose-indriya	Nose	Smell

There is an ineluctable nexus among the three, namely the element, the indriya and its perception. The indriya is located in the apparatus specifically designed for its function. Hearing is made possible thanks to the ear-indriya which abides in the physical ear. If the subtle power of the ear-indriya ceases to be, the ears cannot hear.

Verse 14 says that they that transcend these gain the bliss of deliverance. They indeed are the spiritual heroes. It is thus the Sivaagamas declare. The five sense-instruments cause the soul to get more and more attached to things phenomenal. They foster worldly life. The outlook becomes utterly materialistic. Embodiment is highly useful. However more often than not, it is abused and it causes successive embodiments, well-nigh interminable. Basic bodily needs alone should be supplied. Embodied life should learn of detachment. Its goal should be the gain of deliverance. St.

Appar, in his infinite mercy, sang a hymn called Tiruvangka Maalai. He assigns a specific function for each and every bodily instrument the performance of which spells sempiternal good for the soul.

Kanmendriyas

கண்ணுதல் நூல் ஓதியிடும் கன்மேந் திரியங்கள்
எண்ணும் வச்னாதிக்கு இடமாக – நண்ணியிடும்
வாக்குப் பாதம் பாணி மன்னு குதம் உபத்தம்
ஆக்கருதும் நாளும் அது. – 15

The scriptures posited by the Lord who sports an eye
In His forehead affirm thus: Lips articulate;
Feet perform locomotion; hands give and receive;
Anus excretes; genital organs provide pleasure. - 15

வாக்கு ஆகாயம் இடமா வந்து வசனிக்கும்; கால்
போக்காகும் காற்றிடமாய்; புல்கி அனல் – ஏற்கும்
இடும் கை; முகம் நீர் இடமா மலாதி
விடும்; பார் இடம் உபத்தம் விந்து. – 16

Vaak connected with space causes articulation;
Thanks to their medium Air, feet move; hands having
Nexus with fire receive and give; excretory organs linked
With water ejest faeces and the like; genital organs tied
To the Earth expel seminal fluid. - 16

Gnaanendriyas are evolved out of Saatvika Aangkaaram and Kanmendriyas out of Raajasa Aankaaram. Even as Gnaanendriyas activise soul's gnaana-sakti, Kanmendriyas activise soul's kriya-sakti. Gnaanendriyas are instruments of knowledge and Kanmendriyas are instruments of action.

What applies to Gnaanendriyas applies to Kanmendriyas. A dumb person is unable to speak even though he has a mouth, for the indriya concerned has become extinct.

It should be remembered here that the mouth which eats and sustains the body is a Gnaanendriya. The mouth that speaks is a Kanmendriya. This is likened to an elephant's trunk which serves as a hand, the while helping it to breathe.

The following table is self-explanatory

	Kanmendriya	Its medium/locus	Its function
1.	Mouth	Space	Speech
2.	Feet	Air	Movement
3.	Hands	Fire	Giving and receiving
4.	Excretory organs	Water	Excretion
5.	Genitals	Earth	Ejesting seminal fluid

Anta-k-Karanam

Gnaanendriyas sense things in a general (vague) way. Its knowledge at this stage is nirvikalpa. Then through the instrumentality of anta-k-karanam it comes by a knowledge of the names, qualities, functions etc., of the things sensed. This is sa-vikalpa knowledge.

அந்தக் கரணம் அடைவே உரைக்கக் கேள்:
அந்தமனம் புத்தியுடன் ஆங்காரம் – சிந்தை இவை
பற்றியது நிச்சயித்துப் பல்கால் எழுந்திருந்து அங்கு
உற்றது சிந்திக்கும் உணர். – 17

Listen to a proper exposition of Anta-k-Karanam:
These are manam, buddhi, aangkaaram and chittam;
Manam seizes; buddhi resolves; aangkaaram rises up;
Of these chittam contemplates. Thus are they, even thus. - 17

Anta-k-Karanam may be described as the inner sensorium. It is from Daisata Aangkaaram manam evolves. The Sanskrit equivalent to manam is *manas*. Its English equivalent is not mind. This should be remembered always. Mind is consciousness. Manam is jada, insentient. It is evolved out of matter.

Soul is different from Anta-k-Karanam. Indriyas serve as gateways to knowledge and Anta-k-Karanam as the instruments of knowledge. Anta-k-Karanam are subtler and more light-diffusing than indriyas. Yet they too are truly insentient (jada). By reason of their proximity with soul they are mistakenly viewed as sentient. Even as eyes behold with the help of a lamp, soul perceives with the help of Anta-k-Karanam. These are internal instruments. They are only instruments. The first adikaranam of the fourth sutra of the Sivagnaanabhodam deals with Anta-k-Karanam.

P. Mutthiah Pillai opines that Chittam merely knows that a thing is, that it does not cognise other details, that manam is a doubter, that it is unable to decide whether it is this or that, A or B etc., that at this juncture arises the faculty called aangkaaram to investigate into the matter and that it is buddhi which eventually determines what the thing is. According to him, Chittam is a mere cognizer, buddhi is a doubting Thomas, aangkaaram arises to investigate and buddhi judges and passes the verdict.

A more correct interpretation is as follows.

An external pulan is captured by the instrument concerned, and is placed before manam which takes hold of it. Then buddhi settles what the thing is. Aangkaaram is not only the field for such operations but is also the operator. Chittam contemplates and contemplates about the thing secured.

Soul through the four instruments of Anta-k-Karanam comes by a definite knowledge of things perceived and gets immersed in it.

Manam cannot arrive at any decision. It is through buddhi, soul learns of the nature, quality, function etc., of the thing and concludes what the thing truly is. After this it is aangkaaram which helps the soul in its further operation. Aangkaaram is an instigator. It is chittam which eventually helps soul to experience the thing perceived and held. By contemplation experience is rendered possible and by repeated contemplation experience gets richer and richer.

The function of chitta is contemplation, meditation, reflection. Its contemplation may relate to the past, the present and the to-come.

By now the reader must have a fair picture of the twenty-four tattvas they being the five tanmaatras, the five bhutas, the five gnaanendriyas, the five kanmendriyas and the four Anta-k-Karanam. These twenty-four are known as Aanma tattvas and also Prakruti-Maya tattvas. The presiding deity of these tattvas is Sri Kantar. Soul must know that these tattvas are so, that it can transcend them.

Vidya Tattvas

ஓதிடும் நாலாறும் உள்ள ஆன்ம தத்துவம் என்று
ஆதி அருள் நூல் அறையுங் காண்; – தீதறவே
வித்தியா தத்துவங்கள் தம்மை விளம்பக் கேள்
உத்தமனே நன்றா உனக்கு. – 18

The tattvas four times six, so far narrated, are
Aanma tattvas; thus affirm the gracious scriptures

Of God; now will be unfolded unflawed the Vidya tattvas;
Listen, O noble one, with care and attention. - 18

The above verse is addressed by the Guru to his chela.

However useful the Aanma tattvas are, they prove to be inadequate. Other tattvas are also felt to be necessary. Soul is naturally prone to learn of that which is good. It longs for it. It is prone to seek it. Of these the capacity for knowledge is called gnaana sakti. The ability to will it is known as iccha sakti. The capability to work out is kriya sakti. These three foster the desire for experiencing the things of the world and make such experience possible.

Soul stands fettered by Aanava mala which impedes its progress as well as experience. Only when it is to some extent released from the hold of Aanava mala, can it come by experience. For this a few more instruments are needed.

Embodied soul enures for a specific number of days. For its operation during such embodiment it needs time. So, time and other instruments too. are required. So, seven more tattvas are provided for soul. These are not evolved out of Prakruti Maya. They are evolved out of Asuddha Maya which is above Prakruti. The tattvas so evolved are called Suddhasuddha Maya, Misra Maya or Vidya tattvas. They are Maya, Kaalam (Time), Niyati (Destiny), Kalai, Vidya, Araagam and Purusha. These are collectively known as Asuddha Maya tattvas.

Maya

The first of these seven tattvas called Maya is a modicum of the expansive Asudda Maya. From this Maya are evolved Kaalam and other tattvas.

Kaalam (Time)

It should be remembered that Asuddha Maya Kaalam is something which is created. So it has an end. Mahakavi Bharati says that Time and the three worlds come to an end at the Dissolution of the worlds.

Even though the Asuddha-Maya Time comes to an end the Suddha Maya-Time continues.

It is in time everything takes place. Time is classifiable into past, present and future. It is inert and fleeting. Time is the first of the Vidya tattvas. Next comes Niyati (Destiny). So far as operation is concerned Kalai begins to operate first. Kaalam and Niyati begin their operation next.

Avvaiyaar says:
"Repeated attempts notwithstanding, efforts do not
Fructify except at the appointed hour.
The trees, long and lofty and stately, yield not
Their fruits except during their season."

Wise men say that time is not before you or behind you. It is around you. So, it is not linear, but circular. Triloka Sitaram speaks of *Suzhalum aandukall* (circling years).

Niyati (Rule or order)

The second of the Vidya Tattvas is known as Niyati. It is Niyati which keeps (maintains) men and things in their places. But for this the cosmos will be like chaos. It causes souls to eat the fruits of their karma. Activising Niyati, Sakti maintains order in the universe. Niyati, truly speaking, is

destiny. Niyati causes souls to undergo their destined karma. Kaalam quantifies experience.

Kalai

If soul should undergo experience, it must be, at least to an extent, liberated from the hold of Aanava malam. Only when the iccha, gnaana and kriya saktis operate, experience is possible. The tattvas that help such operation are Kalai (Skt. Kalaa), Vitthai (Skt. Vidya) and Araagam (Skt. Raagam).

Kalai is the third of the Vidya tattvas. It helps soul to free itself, in a small measure, and activises soul's kriya sakti. Without the help of kriya sakti, gnaana sakti cannot operate at all. So it is kriya sakti that is first activised. It is kriya sakti which vests soul with doership. Kalai acts on the medium of buddhi-tattva and in a limited way, undoes the obscuration caused by Aanava malam.

Vidya and Araagam

Vidya tattva is evolved out of Kalai itself. This, to an extent, controls the power of Aanava malam and activises gnaana sakti. Out of Vidya is evolved Araagam. This activises soul's iccha sakti (the power to will).

Kaalam, Niyati and Kalai get evolved directly from Asuddha Maya. However Vidya and Araagam emanate from Kalai. "Why so?" is to be explained.

It is important to remember here that it is soul's consciousness that knows, wills and does. These are called gnaana, iccha and kriya saktis. These three arise from the same source and are only the different aspects of one and the same thing. So, it is from Kalai whence evolves kriya,

gnaanam also arises. Gnaanam and iccha (knowledge and will) are the different aspects of the same thing. So from Vidya whence gnaanam arises, also emanates Araagam which activises iccha.

Indriyas act as windows through which objects are perceived. The impression of an object is cast on manam. This type of perception is known as indiriya-k-kaatchi or Vaayil Kaatchi, i.e., perception through or by way of indriyas. This type of perception is imperfect, incomplete and indeterminate. In other words it is Nirvikalpa-k-kaatchi. Savikalpa-k-kaatchi is made possible thanks to Araagam and buddhi tattvas. This then is experienced and is known as Tanvetanai-k-kaatchi (experiential knowledge).

Indriya-k-kaatchi or vaayil kaatchi pertains to external objects and Tanvetanai-k-kaatchi to internal experience.

Kalai plays a useful role by activising Kriya sakti. This however is inadequate. An illustration will clarify the position. After an operation of cataract, the eyes may not yet see things clearly. A pair of spectacles may be required. Vidya can be likened to the pair of spectacles.

Araagam may be explained as an amplification of Vidya. Araagam means desire/attraction. Araagam activises/prompts/excites iccha sakti. This sakti establishes a kinship between Araagam and Buddhi.

Araagam activises soul's iccha sakti, Vidya gnaana sakti and Kalai kriya sakti. Thus is soul made fit to undergo experience. Niyati makes experiencing imperative and ineluctable. Kaalam fixes the duration of experience. These

five tattvas are inseparably linked with soul and are therefore called pancha kanchukam (five sheaths). They are the irremovable cloak of the soul. They make the soul fit to undergo experience. When the soul is thus characterised by this capacity to experience (bhothuthvam) it is called Purusha tattva. Though this is described as a tattva, strictly speaking it is not an individual tattva at all. When the soul is in conjunction with the five tattvas mentioned above, it is called Purusha (tattva).

The Purusha suffers from a pentad of defects called the pancha klesa – or pumsthuva mala. They are (1) avidya (nescience), (2) aangkaaram (egoity), (3) avaa (desire), (4) aasai (avarice) and (5) kroda (anger/aversion).

Barring Maya and Purusha other tattvas evolve by parinaama (transformation). A part of Maya becomes Kaalam, another part Niyati, and yet another Kalai. A part of Kalai (Kalaa) becomes Vidya. A part of Vidya becomes Araagam. Another part of Kalai evolves as Prakruti.

The seven tattvas namely, Kaalam, Niyati, Kalai, Vidya, Araagam, Purusha and Maya are called Vidya Tattvas. Vidya means knowledge. They activise soul's knowledge, will and action. Vidya tattvas are called Bhojayithru Kaandam. Bhojayithru is the one who experiences.

Now we will study the relevant verses.

List of the Vidya Tattvas

காலம் நியதி கருதுங் கலை வித்தை
ஏய இராகம் புருடனே மாயை – மால் அறவே
சொன்னோம் அடைவாகச் சொன்ன இவைதம் உண்மை
உன்னி உரைக்க நாம் உற்று. – 19

Kaalam, Niyati, Kalai, Vidya, Araagam,
Purusha and Maya are the seven Vidya tattvas.
To quell confusion, we spoke of these.
Now will we explicate their nature and function. - 19

Vidya Tattvas: Their Function

எல்லை பலம் புதுமை எப்போதும் நிச்சயித்தல்
அல்லல் தரும் கிரியை ஆன்மாவுக்கு – ஒல்லை
அறிவு ஆசை ஐம்புலனும் ஆர வரும் காலம்
குறியா மயக்கு என்று கொள். – 20

Limit, fruit and novelty characterise Kaalam;
Niyati defines Karmic experience; Kalai illumines,
A trifle, Kriyei; Vidya similarly activises Gnaana;
Araagam likewise provokes will-power. Linked with these
Purusha is made fit for experiencing. - 20

The doer must needs undergo the consequences of his deeds. Kaalam sets the time-limit for this. Time past frees soul from the experienced results. This is called the limit. Time present links soul with the consequences of current experience. This is known as fruit (phalam). Time prepares soul to confront the experience of consequences in future. This is called novelty.

Niyati defines the karmic experience. Soul cannot escape the consequences of its deeds. It is destined to undergo the ordained.

Kalai, to an extent, activises kriya sakti. It is thus the soul is enabled to act. In a similar way Vidya stimulates gnaana sakti. Araagam, in its turn, activises the soul's power to will.

In conjunction with these, Purusha is readied to undergo experience.

Vidya Tattva		**Function**	
1. Kaalam :	Past	Limit	
	Present	Fruit (phalam)	
	Future	Novelty	
2. Niyati		Destining	
3. Kalai		Kriyei (Action)	Activising
4. Vidya		Knowledge	
5. Araagam		Will	
6. Purusha		Soul linked with the above five tattvas	
7. Maya		Bewilderment	

Suddha Tattvas

Suddha Tattvas are Suddha Maya Tattvas and are also known as Siva Tattvas.

Here it is good to remember that Vidya tattvas cannot operate by themselves. It is Siva's Sakti which should activise them and cause their operation.

Siva does not operate directly. He must have a field of operation. Fire by its nature does not operate by itself. It is attached to something else (fuel, oil etc.). Then only it begins its operation. Even so, Siva's Sakti needs a field of operation. That indeed is Suddha Maya, pure and untainted. Siva's Sakti evolves out of Suddha Maya a pentad of tattvas known as Sivam, Sakti, Saadaakyam, Easuram and Suddha Vidya.

Evolution out of Asuddha Maya and Prakruti is by the process called Parinaamam (transformation). Evolutes of Suddha Maya do not manifest through this process. Here the manifestation emerges through the process known as Virutti

(Skt. Vrutti). Virutti, generally speaking, is amplification. The thing which remains coiled gets expanded. This is called virutti. The tent cloth is kept folded. To make use of it, it must be unfolded. When duly expanded it serves as a tent. It is through virutti the Siva tattvas get manifested.

Siva tattva

This is the first evolute of Suddha Maya. At the time of the universal Absorption everything gets absorbed into Maya which in turn stands absorbed by Sakti. Sakti too is absorbed into Sivam. In this state, Sivam alone remains. This is called Maha Samhaaram. This is called Odukkam in Tamil. Lord Siva is known as Odungki. When Siva, in His mercy, contemplates creation (Srishti), He, in a general way, activises a portion of Suddha Maya, whence manifests Siva Tattva. This tattva is characterised by latency. It therefore is known as Laya Tattva. It is without form. So it is called Nishkala Tattva. Yet, this is fit for action. Hence its name Saktimaan. This tattva is the substrate of the primal sound called Sukshma Vaak. It therefore is called Naadam. This tattva is characterised by pure gnaanam. It alone operates here.

The God of this tattva has many names, they being Laya Siva, Nishkala Siva, Saktimaan and Naadam.

Sakti Tattva

The second of the Siva Tattvas is Sakti Tattva. When Siva, through His Kriya Sakti, activises a portion of Siva tattva which manifested first, and causes it to expand, Sakti tattva emerges. It is less subtle than Siva tattva. It is therefore called Gross Laya Tattva or Gross Nishkala Tattva. It is called Vintu (Skt. Bindu). It is pure kriya. The five Kalaas called Nivruti, Prathishta, Vidya, Saanti and Saanti-atita are but the modifications of Kriya Sakti.

Sadaasiva Tattva

This is the third of the Siva Tattvas and is also known as Saadaakyam. When Siva, through His Gnaana Sakti, activises a portion of the Sakti Tattva which came into being after the emergence of Siva Tattva, this tattva manifests. In this tattva Gnaanam and Kriya are held in equilibrium. This is the locus of Siva's Pancha (five) Saktis. This is known as bhoga tattva.

Easura Tattva

This is the fourth of the Siva Tattvas. It is the amplification of a modicum of Sadaa Siva Tattva. This is ushered into existence through Siva's Kriya Sakti. This tattva is also known as Sukshma Atikaara Tattva, Sukshma Pravritti Tattva and Sukshma Sakala Tattva. In this tattva action (kriya) dominates over knowledge (gnaanam).

Suddha Vidya

This is the fifth and last of the Siva Tattvas. This is evolved out of a portion of Easura Tattva through Siva's gnaana sakti. There is another tattva also called Vidya which forms part of Asuddha Maya Tattvas. To distinguish this from that, this is known as Suddha Vidya. Here gnaanam dominates over kriya. This tattva is the cause of Vidya tattva which is an Asuddha Maya tattva.

Suddha Vidya is also known as gross Easura tattva, gross Atikaara tattva, gross Pravritti tattva and gross Sakala tattva.

The Siva Tattvas constitute the Preraka Kaandam, the Vidya Tattvas Bojaitru Kaandam and Aanma Tattvas the Bhogya Kaandam. The Siva Tattvas guide and direct, the Vidya Tattvas serve as aids to experience and the Aanma

Tattvas are objects of experience. The co-ordination among these tattvas is consummately conceived and executed with precision and perfection.

The prerakam (direction) of the Suddha tattvas is as follows. Siva tattva directs Maya and Sakti tattva operates in Kalai, Kaalam and Niyati. Saadakya governs Purusha tattva. Easura tattva guides Araagam and Suddha Vidya directs Vidya.

The gnaana and kriya saktis of Siva act independently. They also mesh with each other. Sometimes, one predominates over the other and vice versa. Siva's iccha sakti stands apart.

The evolution of the Siva tattvas is indicated in the following table.

Suddha Maya

|

1. Sivam also known as Naadam

|

2. Sakti also known as Vintu

|

3. Sadaasivam also known as Saadakyam

|

4. Easuram

|

5. Suddha Vidya

As Siva Himself operates these tattvas, they are known as Siva tattvas. He is the evolver and resolver of these tattvas. These tattvas are called Suddha (pure) as they are free from the taint of Aanava and Kanma malas.

Verses 21 and 22 deal with the Suddha tattvas. The guru says:

வித்தியா தத்துவங்கள் ஏழும் விளம்பினோம்
சுத்தமாம் தத்துவங்கள் சொல்லக் கேள் – நித்தமாம்
சுத்த வித்தை ஈசுரம் பின் சொல்லும் சதாசிவம் நல்
சத்தி சிவம் காண் அவைகள் தாம். – 21

We spoke to you of the seven Vidya Tattvas; now listen
To the narration of the Suddha Tattvas; they are
The sempiternal Suddha Vidya, Easuram, Sadasivam,
Goodly Sakti and Sivam. - 21

சுத்த வித்தை ஞானம் மிகும் தொன்மையாக் ஈசுரம்தான்
அத்தன் தொழில் அதிகம் ஆக்கி இடும்; – ஒத்த இவை
சாதாக்கியம் என்றும் சத்தி சிவம் கிரியை
ஆதார ஞானஉரு ஆம். – 22

In Suddha Vidya gnaanam dominates over kriya;
In hoary Easuram kriya dominates over gnaanam;
They are in equilibrium in Saadaakya; Sakti is
Of the form of kriya and Sivam of gnaanam. - 22

Siva's Sakti is threefold, they being iccha, gnaana and kriya. Iccha (Will) undergoes no change. As regards gnaana and kriya, there is difference in their functioning. One dominates over the other and vice versa. They are also in equilibrium. Kriya's domination characterises Suddha Vidya, gnaanam's Easuram and equilibrium Sadaakya.

The tattvas number 36 and these evolve from and resolve into Maya. The other aspects of Paasam are:

Aanavam and Kanmam (karma)

ஆறாறு தத்துவமும் சொன்னோம் அடைவாக
மாறா மலம் இரண்டும் வாசொல்லக் – கூறில்

அறியாமை ஆணவம் நீ ஆன சுக துக்கம்
குறியா வினை என்று கொள். - 23

We explicated the tattvas six times six duly and properly;
Now we will speak of the two inseparable malas;
Truly speaking Aanavam is nescience; the source
Of your pain and joy is indeed Kanmam. - 23

Souls are intelligent entia. Yet they suffer from ignorance also. This accounts for their apparently unending embodiments. Yet they learn their lesson eventually. After many many and still many re-births, they slowly feel that they should end their transmigration. It is thanks to their becoming alive to the existence and operation of Aanava mala as well as Kanma mala.

By now we should have a fair idea about the malas. The soul is linked with these malas. What indeed is the de-mala-ed soul?

Soul

ஆறாறு தத்துவமும் ஆணவமும் வல்வினையும்
மாறா அருளால் வகுத்து உரைத்தீர் – வேறு ஆகா
என்னை எனக்கு அறியக் காட்டீர் இவை கண்டேன்
உன்னரிய தேசிகரே உற்று - 24

You were, by your abiding grace, pleased to explicate
The tattvas six times six, the Aanava and Kanma malas.
Hitherto I stood identified with these. O great guru!
Reveal me to myself. - 24

நன்றா உரைக்கக் கேள் நல்லசித்தின்முன் அசித்து இங்கு
ஒன்றாது; சித்து அசித்தை ஓராது; – நின்ற இவற்றை
அன்றே பகுத்து அறிவது ஆன்மாவே என்று மறை
குன்றாமல் ஓதும் குறித்து. - 25

Listen well to the explication of soul; before the Supreme Cit
Acit cannot abide; Cit need not take note of Acit;
It is the soul that can ratiocinate and learn of them.
It is thus the fadeless Vedas declare. - 25

The world is a created thing. It is jada. It is full of experiential objects. They are experienced by the senses. It is for such experience by the soul the objects of the world exist.

Cit (Intelligence) is of two types. One is God – the omniscient; the other is soul which is parviscient. Of these it is the soul which undergoes experience. God is perfect perfection. He pervades everything. He contains all things. There is nought which is outside God for Him to experince. He is above empirical knowledge. It is the soul which undergoes experience. It alone should. Getting one with the objects, it experiences them. The soul is the experiencer and the objects are things provided for its experience.

The world and its objects are Acit (Jada/ Unintelligent). The soul is cit. Cit must establish nexus with Cit and not Acit which is non-soul. When thus instructed by the guru, the soul realizes its true nature and essays to get away from Acit and merge with the supreme Cit. In its fettered state, the soul is bound with the objects of the world. In its freed state, it is freed from its attachment to the world and its objects. Before explicating what soul is, let us find out what soul is not.

Tattvas and Soul

தத்துவங்கள் ஆறாறும் தம்மைத் தாம் என்று அறியா;
எத்தன்மை எனில் இயம்பக்கேள்; – சுத்தமாம்
ஆறு சுவையும் அறியாவே தம்மைத் தாம்
கூறில் அவை இவைபோல் கொள். - 26

Tattvas six times six know not that they are tattvas.
To what may this be likened? The answer is that tastes
That are sextuple know not what they are. Truly speaking
Tattvas are very like these tastes. - 26

ஆறு சுவையும் அருந்தி அவை தம்மை
வேறு ஒருவன் கூறிமிடும் மேன்மைபோல் – ஆறாறும்
ஒன்று ஒன்றாய் நாடி உணர்ந்து ஓதில் அதில் உற்று அறிவாய்
நின்ற பொருள் தானே காண் நீ. – 27

A man eats food of sextuple taste, knows of them and speaks
Of their relish; even so you individually examine the tattvas,
Six times six and know of them; You are the knower and you
Stand from these apart. - 27

The work Unmai Vilakkam does not deal exhaustively with pasu (soul). Pati is omniscient; paasam is totally nescient and pasu is parviscient. Pati needs no instrument or aid to know anything. No aid or instrument can even cause paasam to know aught. It is pasu which is in need of instruments to come by knowledge.

Pati is Sat (pure Being), Cit (pure Knowledge) and Aananda (pure Bliss). Pati is known as Siva-Sat. Pasu comes under the category of Sat as well as Cit.

Paasam is Asat and Acit

Though Pasu is Sat as well as Cit, it is not pure Sat or pure Cit. It is called, by reason of its association with Paasam, Sat-Asat (Satasat) and Cit-Asit. Pasu is what it is attached to. It is "Saarnthathan vannam". It is like a crystal which reflects the colours of things close by. When the rays of the noon-day sun fall straight on it, it shows its own hue. Only when the rays of knowledge fall on Pasu, its true nature

is revealed. When Grace descends on Pasu, it gains its true nature.

Pati is not in need of deliverance. There is no deliverance for paasam. It is Pasu which needs it, and is, in fact, entitled to it. In repeated re-births, the Pasu becomes aware of its plight and begins to yearn for deliverance.

Pati

குன்றா அருளாலே கூறினீர் என் வடிவு
பொன்றாத நும் உருவம் போதியீர் – நின்று அருக்கன்
க்ண்ணுக்குக் காட்டுமாப் போலே உனது அறிவில்
நண்ணி அறிவித்திடுவோம் நாம். – 28

By your ever-during grace you taught me of my form;
Now do teach me of your fadeless form. Lo, even as
The sun's rays mingling with the light of eyes make you
See, I abide in your intellect and enlighten you. - 28

Human eyes by themselves cannot see. If they can, they must behold things even in utter darkness. Eyes do need the aid of an external light. During day, the light of the sun mingles with the light of eyes and seeing is made possible. Though the light of sun mingles with the light of eyes, the sun's light is different from the light of eyes. Remaining different, the light of sun helps the human eyes to see. Even so, soul does not know aught by itself. Enlightened by Pati, it comes by knowledge. God is immanent in the human being. His mingling with soul is inseparable. Yet Pati is Pati and Pasu is but Pasu. Abiding different from soul, He enlightens and soul comes by knowledge. Verse 28 conveys the message that Pati who is different from soul, yet mingles with it and causes the soul to get enlightened.

In verse 28, the disciple deems his guru as God Himself. The guru's words by way of reply are to be deemed God's own words.

The following verse informs us how Pati is one with the soul. It contains the words of the guru.

அன்றியும் கேள் ஆன்மாவால் ஆய்ந்து அறியும் ஐம்பொறிகள்
இன்றி அறியா இவை என்ன – நின்றது போல்
ஓவாமல் உன்னை உணர்த்துவோம் உன் அறிவில்
மேவாமல் மேவி நாம். – 29

Also listen to this. Soul cannot cognise without the aid
Of the pentad of senses; even so we abide in you but stand
Apart; at once abiding and standing apart, we so cause you
To know that you yourself appear to be the knower. - 29

God's abidance in the soul is described as *mevaamal mevi* (abiding without abiding). He so abides that His true nature is unaffected. The case of Pasu is not so. It becomes what it is attached to. Pati is always Pati and never becomes Pasu, though He abides in it.

Pati's state of difference is described by the word *veraai*, his abidance by the word *ondraai* and his inherent animation as *udanaai*. Verse 30 describes what *udanaai nitral* is.

அக்கரங்கட்கு எல்லாம் அகரஉயிர் நின்றாற் போல்
மிக்க உயிர்க்கு உயிராய் மேவினோம் – எக் கண்ணும்
நில்லா இடத்து உயிர்க்கு நில்லாது அறிவு என்று
நல் ஆகமம் ஓதும் நாடு. – 30

Like *Akaram* that abides in, sustains and activises
All letters, we abide as the life of all lives and activise them.

But for Our omnipresence, lives cannot come by knowledge.
It is thus the goodly Aagamas declare. - 30

This verse is based on an illustrative verse of the Sivagnaanabhotham which is as follows.

ஒன்றென்ற தொன்றே காணொன்றே பதிபசுவா
மொன்றென்ற நீபாசத் தோடுளைகா – ணொன்றின்றா
லக்கரங்க ளின்றா மகர வுயிரின்றே
லிக்கிரமத் தென்னு மிருக்கு.

Akaram is 'A', the first letter of alphabet. The sound 'A' automatically manifests when the mouth is opened. No effort is needed to produce this sound. A toy popular among the infants of England (VTECH, ALFIE) teaches babes the letter sounds. This toy pronounces 'A' as அ. This அ is the basis of letters as well as sounds. This அ is understood in all sounds, whatever their combination be. In other words, all the letters and their sounds are made possible thanks to அ. This produces the sound of A as in And.

In Tamil, letters are classified as Uyir ezhutthu (life-letters) and Mei-ezhutthu (body-letters). The letter அ abides in all the letters of these two types.

The world is composed of lives and things, namely cit (animate) and jada (inanimate). God abides both in cit and jada. For the manifestation and operation of letters, அ is the foundational letter. Even so God is the foundation of all lives and things. As the Life of all lives, God activises all lives. This is known as *udanaai nitral*.

The relationship of Pati with Pasu is described by the words *ondraai* (one with), *veraai* (different from) and *udanaai* (abiding as basis). Verses 28 to 30 explain these.

Verse 31 relates to the request of the disciple to the guru who is beseeched to explicate the dance of Siva.

நற்றவத்தோர் தாம்காண நாதாந்தத்து அஞ்சு எழுத்தால்
உற்று உருவாய் நின்று ஆடல் உள்ளபடி–பெற்றிட நான்
விண்ணார் பொழில் வெண்ணெய் மெய்கண்ட நாதனே!
தண்ணார் அருளாலே சாற்று. – 31

O Meikanda – the Lord of Vennainallur girt with groves
That brush the heavens! For the witnessing of goodly
tapaswis,
The Lord assuming a form from the Panchaakshara which is
Atop Naadaantam enacts His dance.
In your abounding mercy,
Be pleased to explicate this to me. - 31

Siva enacts five types of dances called Sivaanandam, Sundaram, Porpati, Portillai and Arputam. Siva is the Divine Dancer par excellence. He enacts His fivefold acts through His dance. This dance confers grace on souls. It is the movement of Siva which causes all movement. "Even an atom cannot move but for Him" is an ancient adage in Tamil.

Siva enacts His dance called Aananda Taandavam at Tillai. This dance is enacted for the redemption of souls. This dance is ever witnessed by tapaswis who seek no greater beatitude. They are poised in bliss for ever.

Naadam is the peak of all the tattvas. Siva is Tattvaatitan, the One beyond the tattvas. It is in this transcendental state, Siva's dance is enacted. When Siva so dances, tattvas vibrate with meaning. The Dancer of Naadaantam has a body wrought of Atisukshma Panchaaksharam. So this dance is known as Panchaakshara Dance.

Naadaantam is the transcendental state. It is the state beyond the tattvas. The soul too must transcend all the tattvas to gain deliverance. Only in this state the soul feels that it is totally different from tattvas.

In its fettered state, Aanava malam predominates as Siva remains recondite. When Siva upsurges in the soul in its transcendental stage, the soul linked with Siva, is like a lamp subsumed in the light of the sun. In such a state, the soul merges in Naadaanta in absolute bliss. It is of the dance in Naadaanta the disciple seeks enlightenment.

The locus of the divine Dance

எட்டும் இரண்டும் உருவான லிங்கத்தே
நட்டம் புதல்வா நவிலக்கேள் – சிட்டன்
சிவாயநம என்னும் திருஎழுத்து அஞ்சாலே
அவாயம் அற நின்று ஆடுவான். – 32

O Son! Listen to the exposition of the dance that is
Enacted in the soul the emblem of which is Ya
Made up of eight and two. The Lord with His body
Si Va Ya Na Ma
Dances, that all lives may gain deliverance. - 32

The dance of Siva is a liberating dance. It is enacted for the deliverance of the soul. The Tamil letter Ya (ய) is made up eight (அ) and two (உ). The soul is referred to in this way in the Tamil scriptures. Soul is microcosm and cosmos is macrocosm. The microcosm is essentially the same as the macrocosm. The Lord dances in the macrocosm as well as microcosm. G.U. Pope quotes an adage which says: "Kelati Ande Kelati Pinde". The play is enacted in Andam (macrocosm) as well as pindam (microcosm). The Dancer is Siva. In this dance Siva dances with the body of

Panchaakshara (Si Va Ya Na Ma). It is a mystic dance enacted with the form of the mystic pentad. This Panchaakshara is known as the Sukshma Panchaakshara.

It is the soul which is the theatre where Siva dances. The purpose of the Dance is to put an end to the embodiment of the soul for ever.

The Dance explained

ஆடும்படி கேள் அம்பலத்தான் ஐயனே
நாடும் திருவடியிலே நகரம் - கூடும்
மகரம் உதரம் வளர்தோள் சிகரம்
பகரும் முகம் வா முடியப் பார். - 33

Dear one, listen to the exposition of the (sthula) Dance
Of the Lord of Ambalam: His feet are Na: His naval
Is Ma: His ever-crescent arms are Si; His visage is Va;
His head is Ya indeed. - 33

The above verse describes the form of Sthula Panchaakshara. Panchaakshara is classified as Sthula (gross), Sukshma (subtle) and Ati Sukshma (extremely subtle).

The dance of Siva is twofold. That dance which causes the repeated births of the soul so that the soul may gain its coveted maturation is called *Unam* (not ultimate) and the dance that confers deliverance on the soul is called Gnaanam (Gnosis). Unam has reference to the imperfection still clinging to the soul. Gnaanam is Gnosis through which the soul is made free and liberated.

சேர்க்கும் துடி சிகரம்; சிக்கன வா வீசுகரம்;
ஆர்க்கும் யகரம் அபயகரம் - பார்க்கில் இறைக்கு
அங்கி நகரம் அடிக்கீழ் முயலக னார்
தங்கும் மகரம் அதுதான். - 34

The hand that holds the little drum is Si; the hand
That sways is Va; the hand that signifies refuge is Ya;
The hand that holds fire is Na; the foot that rests
On Muyalakan is indeed Ma. - 34

The mystic pentad indicated in the above verse is Si Va Ya Na Ma. This is Sukshma Panchaakshara. In this dance the form of Siva is Si Va Ya Na Ma.

One foot of Siva rests on Muyalakan – a demon. This demon is symbolic of Aanava Mala. The message is that it is only Siva who can control Aanava Mala. It should be remembered that this Muyalakan is not dead. He is just immobilized, transfixed by Siva's foot.

ஓங்காரமே நல் திருவாசி; உற்று அதனில்
நீங்கா எழுத்தே நிறை சுடராம் – ஆங்காரம்
அற்றார் அறிவர்; அணி அம்பலத்தான் ஆடல் இது
பெற்றார் பிறப்பு அற்றார் பின். – 35

The goodly Arch that circles the Dancer is OM.
The inseparable letters appearing in OM are the blazing rays
Of the Arch; they that are rid of egoity know of the Dance;
Those that are blessed with the vision of the Dancer
Of Ambalam are freed thereafter from metempsychosis. 35

A blazing arch covers the Dancer. It is indeed OM (AUM). It is from this sacred syllable/letter/vocable, the fifty one alphabets manifest and coruscate. The primal light is OM. Its inner light is the Dancer. His dance can be comprehended by only those who have shed their I-ness and My-ness. It is they who are the liberated. They are henceforth exempt from the transmigration of birth and death.

He indeed is the seer who beholds the spiritual behind the physical. He for ever envisions this in his very soul.

The above verse brings out the esoteric significance of the Tiruvaasi (the divine Arch) that forms the back-drop of the dance. This is called *prabha* in Sanskrit. It is Logos itself, that is, AUM – the Womb-of-all and the Seed-of-all. It is from this the alphabets emerge. Truly speaking, alphabets combine in many ways to produce words laden with meaning. They, therefore, are described as lights. A true seer is also a knower. He is a Gnostic. He has beyonded nescience. So far as he is concerned, birth and death do not touch him. He has gained the everlasting life.

The fivefold act of Siva

தோற்றம் துடி அதனில் தோயும் திதி அமைப்பில்
சாற்றிமிடும் அங்கியிலே சங்காரம் – ஊற்றமா
ஊன்று மலர்ப் பதத்தில் உற்றதிரோதம் முத்தி
நான்ற மலர்ப் பதத்தே நாடு. – 36

The hand that wields the *tudi* evolves; the hand
That blesses maintains; the fire-holding hand absorbs;
Obscuration is by the flower-foot that presses down;
Deliverance ensues from the flower-foot held aloft. - 36

Tudi (Skt. damaruka) is a little drum shaped like an hour-glass. From it emanates Naadam (Sound). Naadam inaugurates evolution (creation). What is evolved should be sustained for the destined period. This is wrought by the hand through which blessing is postured. Fire is a destroyer. The fire-holding hand destroys. Destruction in Saiva Siddhanta is called Odukkam (absorption). Obscuration plays a vital role to help souls undergo their destined lives. The foot of Siva's

that presses down is symbolic of obscuration. The uplifted foot indicates deliverance.

Siva dances the world into existence; He maintains it by His dance and He also resolves it by His dance. This indeed is Siva's chorea mystica.

Bharatam

மாயைதனை உதறி வல்வினையைச் சுட்டுமலம்
சாய அமுக்கி அருள்தான் எடுத்து – நேயத்தால்
ஆனந்த வாரிதியில் ஆன்மாவைத் தான் அழுத்தல்
தான் எந்தையார் பரதம் தான். – 37

Throwing Maya away, gutting with fire cruel Karma,
Crushing irretrievably Aanava, manifesting Grace,
Impelled by love, immersing the soul in the sea of Bliss:
This indeed is the Dance enacted by our Father-Lord. - 37

Bharatam is dance. Siva is Taandava-Easwara. Taandava-Easwara is hailed as the greatest Deity by the Rig Veda. Siva is also called Varathar (Bharathar). St.Sekkizhaar hails the Lord of Tillai as Varathar. "Ma natam sei Varathar" (The Dancer who enacts the dance par excellence) are his words.

Verse 37 celebrates the vanquishing of the three malas. Malas block the flow of grace. When the blocking is removed Grace flows with ease and without let or hindrance. Tirobhava Sakti which causes obscuration, at the ordained hour, turns into Arul Sakti. Grace flows and flows and becomes verily a sea of bliss. In this the soul is immersed by Siva.

Siva's body is not wrought of Maya mala. All His forms are forms of Grace. Again the garment, the adornments and the weapons of Siva are all formed of Grace. He is ever poised in Grace.

Body is called Angkam; limbs are called pratyaangkam. Siva's trident, snake, abhaya mudra (the symbolic posture offering refuge), fire etc. are Saangkam. His clothing, adornments, garland and His seat are Upaangkam. In fine, Siva's angkam, pratyaangkam, saangkam and upaangkam are all formed of Grace.

Lord Siva has a form, a formless form and no form. His dance is enacted in all these states.

Mantras too constitute the body of Siva. This body is of especial significance. Pati is one with all the worlds and appears as the very worlds. This is akin to the soul which is invisibly one with the body and appearing as such body. Siva is one with all forms and all forms are His forms. Of His multifarious forms, His form of mantra is fraught with divine and sacred significance. In this context it should be remembered that letters, words and the like manifest from Suddha Maya. The Lord abides in Suddha Maya and activises the products of Asuddha Maya. In this way He has the mantras as His direct locus and through them He confers enlightenment and deliverance to the tapaswis. Though all forms are His forms, His form of mantra is unique. Archanas are to be performed with mantras.

The primal mantra is the Panchaakshara which alone confers Gnosis. Verse 31 speaks of His dance enacted by Him, with His body wrought of the Panchaakshara. That His dance is witnessed by His Consort, is proclaimed in verse 39.

The fragile human body cannot contain the impact of bliss. It is Siva's Consort who ladles bliss to the witnesses of the dance in such a way that the impact of the dance is made deliciously enjoyable for them, commensurate with their receptive power. This is beautifully illustrated by St.Kumaragurupara. "When a babe suffers from a vile malady" says the Saint, "it is the mother who takes the proper medicine, the effect of which is transmitted to the babe through her breast-milk." So, the presence of Sakti (Siva's Consort) at the dance of Siva, is a must. This idea should be borne in mind, when one tries to gain the message of Siva's dance.

The Dance of Bliss

மோனந்த மாமுனிவர் மும்மலத்தை மோசித்துத்
தான் அந்த மானிடத்தே தங்கியிடும் – ஆனந்தம்
மொண்டு அருந்தி நின்று ஆடல் காணும் அருள் மூர்த்தியாகக்
கொண்டு திரு அம்பலத்தான் கூத்து. – 38

The great munis are poised in the Bliss of Silence,
having quelled
The three malas; they are established in egolessness;
They quaff bliss witnessing the divine dance; this is what
The dance of the gracious Lord of the Ambalam performs
for them. - 38

Munis are sages blessed by Siva. They stand freed from phenomenality. They are not attached to the world. They are steeped in silence. Their egos have been done away with. They live the godly life – absolutely informed by bliss. The source of bliss is the Ambalam. It is here Siva enacts for ever His Aananda Taandava. The munis who have gained at-one-ment with the Dancer are for ever immersed in the bliss manifested by Siva's Chorea mystica.

By His dance, Siva teaches mellow souls to dance in delight and dance out woe.

The blessing of the Dance

பரை இடமா நின்றுமிகு பஞ்சாக் கரத்தால்
உரை உணர்வுக்கு எட்டா ஒருவன்–வரைமகள்தான்
காணும் படியே கருணை உருக்கொண்டு ஆடல்
பேணும் அவர்க்கு உண்டோ பிறப்பு. – 39

He is the One beyond word and manam; He is poised
In Panchaakshara; His locus is Para Sakti; His form
Is Mercy's own; His dance is beheld by Paarvati;
They that adore this Dance transcend transmigration - 39

The great dance of Siva is ineffable. Neither words nor manam can comprehend it. It is by and through His kindness one can behold His dance of loving kindness. This Dance is not to be likened with any other dance. Here, the Dancer is the Dance and vice versa. The form of the Dancer is the mantra hailed as the Panchaakshara. The place where the Dance takes place is Parasakti (Primal Energy). It is known as Parai, Paarvati, the Daughter of Himavant who is witnessing the Dance. We have ealier explained the significance of such witnessing. The Dance is a bliss-conferring dance. They that truly adore this are ever free from the cycle of birth and death.

The Panchaakshara is hailed as the Lord's own form. It is the mantra par excellence. It has to be chanted as taught by the guru, though every one is entitled to chant Na Ma Si Va Ya which is sthula Panchaakshara.

The Panchaakshara

நாதாந்த நாடகத்தை நன்றாய் அருள் செய்தீர்
ஓதீர் எழுத்தஞ்சும் உள்ளபடி - தீதறவே
அஞ்சு எழுத்து ஈது ஆகில் அழியும் எழுத்து ஆய் விடுமோ
தஞ்ச அருள் குருவே சாற்று. - 40

You have beautifully explicated to me the Dance
Of Naadaṇta; now be pleased to explain the Panchaakshara.
If blemishless letters constitute the pentad, will they too
Become extinct? O my gracious guru, my refuge,
this explain. - 40

The request of the chela to the guru is couched in the above verse. He earnestly longs to know what the Panchaakshara is. Many are the forms of this mystic pentad. The Panchaakshara is the gross body of Siva, the subtle body of the soul and the very subtle body of Sakti.

A word about the different forms of the Panchaakshara will be helpful. Na Ma Si Va Ya is the Sthula Panchaakshara. It is also the name of Siva as proclaimed by Tirugnaanasambandhar. Every one is entitled to chant this. The Sukshma Panchaakshara is Si Va Ya Na Ma. The chanting of this comes as a gift of grace from the guru.

Na stands for Tirodaanam. Ma stands for Aanava malam. Si is Siva and Va is Sakti. Soul/life is represented by the letter Ya.

In the Sthula Panchaakshara, Ya stands last. Tirodaana and Aanava malas occupy the first and the second places. These create problems for salvation.

In the Sukshma Panchaakshara Si Va Ya Na Ma, Siva and Grace are represented by Si and Va. Then comes the soul Ya. Now the state of the soul is much better. Even here, the soul is not made perfect as Na and Ma are still clinging.

In mukti Panchaakshara Si Va Ya Si Va, the soul is at both ends protected by Si and Va, that is, Siva and Sakti.

Si Va Ya is Ati Shukshma Panchaakshara. Here Na and Ma are completely left out.

The uninitiated soul is entitled to chant the Sthula Panchaakshara only.

Diksha (initiation) offered to the soul is of three types. These are known as Samaya, Visesha and Nirvana. Normally the initiate gets instructed in Sthula Panchaakshara during Samaya diksha. Visesha diksha is offered to those who are at least, to an extent, detached from the world. Here the initiate is blessed with the Sukshma Panchaakshara. In the Nirvana Diksha, the aspirant is blessed with the Ati Sukshma Panchaakshara.

Samaya Diksha is for them that are poised in Chariya, Visesha for them of Kriya and Nirvana for them of Yoga.

The chela desired to know, whether the letters constituting the pentad will also eventually perish. The word Ksharam means destructible. Aksharam means that which is indestructible. Aksharam also means letters. The Pancha-Aksharam is indestructible. The Tamil for Aksharam is ezhutthu. The dictum in Tamil says: "Ezhutthu arivitthavan Iraivan Aakum" (the instructor of letters is God). Here ezhutthu stands for the Panchaakshara. It is the Guru who

blesses the aspirant with the Panchaakshara. Guru in Saiva Siddhanta is Siva-Guru.

The Indestructible Letters

உற்ற குறி அழியும் ஓதுங்கால் பாடைகளில்
சற்றும் பொருள்தான் சலியாது – மற்றதுகேள்
ஈசன் அருள் ஆவி எழில் ஆர் திரோத மலம்
ஆசு இல் எழுத்து அஞ்சின் அடைவு ஆம். – 41

Letters which are symbols may perish; the message
Of letters will not perish; listen to this with care.
Siva, Grace, Soul, beauteous Tirodaana and Aanava:
Of these the flawless pentad of letters is compact. 41

Names are made up of letters. Names like letters may perish. But the Panchaakshara which is the name of Siva will not perish. The Siva Panchaakshara is compact of Siva, Grace, Soul, Tirodaana and Aanava. How this Panchaakshara is to be chanted, is explained in the following verse.

சிவன் அருள் ஆவி திரோதம் மலம் ஐந்தும்
அவன் எழுத்து அஞ்சின் அடைவாம் – இவன் நின்று
நம் முதல் ஓதில் அருள் நாடாது நாடும் அருள்
சிம் முதலா ஓது நீ சென்று. – 42

Siva, Grace, Soul, Tirodaana and Aanava malas
Constitute the content of the Panchaakshara.
Grace is not come by if the pentad beginning with
Na is chanted.
You should chant the pentad that begins with Si. - 42

It is Sukshma and Ati Sukshma Panchaaksharam-s that begin with Si. However one cannot chant these if one lacks the due initiation. This indeed is the message of the dictum of St.Maanickavaachakar's which says: "யானேயோ

தவஞ் செய்தேன்? சிவாயநம எனப் பெற்றேன் ..." (Did I ever perform askesis? Lo, Sivayanama has been conferred on me).

Na Ma Si Va Ya confers weal and welfare during earthly life. It is Sivayanama (or the other panchaakshara beginning with Si Va) which ushers in spiritual weal.

It should however be remembered here that Namasivaya is a potent mantra. It leads the chanter to gain Sivayanama.

The salvific nature

அண்ணல் முதலா அழகு ஆர் எழுத்து ஐந்தும்
எண்ணில் இராப் பகல் அற்று இன்பத்தே – நண்ணி
அருளானது சிவத்தே ஆக்கும் அணுவை
இருளானது தீர இன்று. – 43

If the sublime pentad beginning with Si is chanted
As ordained, the soul will get poised in bliss that is
Beyond night and day; Grace will possess it and cause it
To gain Siva; henceforth Aanava mala will cease. - 43

To gain at-one-ment with the Lord, the soul should transcend duality which is represented by night and day.

The soul can annul its sins by the chanting of Namasivaya. St. Appar says: "Sins perpetrated in the world will be cut and quartered by Namasivaya." True. However to get rid of Aanava mala, the soul should chant Sivayanama as ordained.

Three are the stages/states of the soul, they being Kevala, Sakala and Suddha. Kevala is the state in which the soul without a body lies steeped in Aanava mala. In this state

it is totally ignorant. In the Sakala state, the soul is endowed with a body and is endowed with partial knowledge. Kevala is night and Sakala is day. These should be transcended to gain the Suddha (pure) state. In the Suddha state Aanava malam ceases. Rid of Aanava mala the soul is oned with Siva. The Suddha state is gained through the Siva Panchaakshara.

ஆதி மலம் இரண்டும் ஆதியாய் ஓதினால்
சேதியா மும்மலமும் தீர்வு ஆகா – போதம்
மதிப்பு அரிதாம் இன்பத்தே வாழலாம் மாறி
விதிப்படி ஓது அஞ்சு எழுத்துமே. – 44

If the chanting is done prefixed with the letters
Of Na and Ma, the three malas will not get annulled.
If it is reversed, the soul will thrive in the bliss
Of priceless enlightenment; may you so chant as ordained. 44

The word 'Aadi' stands for the letter Na which symbolizes Tirodaanam. Malam means Aanava malam which is represented by the letter Ma. The Panchaakshara that secures salvation is not the one which begins with Na Ma. It is the one that begins with Si Va. Chanting of this pentad is eventually done without articulation. It merges with thought and yields a constant awareness. This process is taught by the guru. "Vidi ennum anju ezhutthe" (contemplate as ordained the Panchaakshara) is the commandment of St.Meikandaar.

The beatitude of the mystic pentad

அஞ்செழுத்தே ஆகமமும் அண்ணல் அருமறையும்
அஞ்செழுத்தே ஆதிபுராணம் அனைத்தும் – அஞ்செழுத்தே
ஆனந்த தாண்டவமும் ஆறாறுக்கு அப்பாலாம் – 45
மோனந்த மாமுத்தியும்.

The Panchaakshara is indeed is the merciful Lord's Aagamas
And the Vedas rare; It is all the original (eighteen) puranas;
It is indeed the Great Deliverance of Serene Bliss which is
Beyond the six times six (tattvas). - 45

The Vedas are known as the Trayee, they being the Rg, the Yajur and the Saamam. The Yajur Veda is the central Veda. It comprises 101 saakhas (branches). The central is the fifty first which is known as the Bhodaayana Saakha. This is made up of seven Kaandas (parts). The central Kaanda namely the fourth constitutes the Sata Rudreeyam. The fifth prasna is the central prasna of Sata Rudreeyam. In it is the Anuvaaka where occur the words: "Namaha Somayacha Rudraayacha." In the heart of this Anuvaaka, we meet with the following, namely 'Namaha Sivaayacha'. This is the Panchaakshara which can be chanted by all. 'Sivaaya' (Si Va Ya) is Ati Sukshma Panchaakshara. This is the core mantra of St.Appar's Tevaaram which is comprised in Tirumurais 4, 5 and 6. The central Tirumurai is the fifth comprising 100 decads. The fifty first decad, the central one, relates to the holy shrine of Tiruppaalaitthurai. This decad contains eleven verses. In this the sixth verse is the central verse in which is embodied the Panchaakshara par excellence, namely Si Va Ya. It can thus be seen that it is the Panchaakshara which is the message of the Vedas. The Vedas are to be understood in the light of the Saiva Aagamas. It is Aagamas which enunciate the rites of Diksha (initiation).

It is during initiation the Panchaakshara is entrusted to the disciple (aspirant / initiate) by the guru. So, needless to say that it is the Panchaakshara which is the true content of the Aagamas. All the puranas magnify the Panchaakshara, as they ought to, as it is the Panchaakshara which pervades them salvifically. Sri Krishna was initiated into the mystery of the

Sri Panchaakshara by St. Upamanyu. The Maha Bharatha narrates in detail the initiation undergone by Sri Krishna.

It is the Panchaakshara which is the Ananda Taandava (the Dance of Bliss enacted by Nataraja-Siva). In this Dance, is made manifest, an ocular demonstration of the Panchaakshara. The Dance is beheld by the inner eye.

The Panchaakshara confers on the mellow soul the Bliss of Deliverance. The Bliss enjoyed here is ineffable and is therefore described as Mona Ananda Ma Mukti (The Great Deliverance of Serene (Silent) Bliss.

Mutthi (Skt. Mukti) is the ultimate beatitude. In this state, the soul oned with Siva enjoys unending bliss.

A word about the nature of soul is to be mentioned here. A soul has no independent status. It is what it is attached to. Its condition is one of perpetual dependence. In its fettered state it is attached to the mundane world and its phenomena. In other words it is attached to Paasam of threefold malas. When this attachment ceases it is one with Pati. Truly speaking its at-one-ment with Pati spells its freedom. Its attachment to Paasam is its thralldom. In its liberated state it comes under the exclusive pervasion of Pati. This pervasion is one of perpetual bliss. Soul is entitled to this bliss. However, misled by Aanava mala, it stands chained to the world. We will now essay to understand the state of soul in mukti.

முத்திதனை அடைந்தோர் முந்துபழம் போது அங்கி
வித்தகமாம் வீணை இவையிற்றின் – ஒத்த
இரதம் மணம் வெம்மை எழில்நாதம் போல
விரவுவார் ஓதும் விதி. – 46

The muktas' (inseparable) union with God is like
Fruit and its essence, flower and its fragrance,
Fire and its heat and tuneful veena and its dulcet melody.
It is thus the Aagamas describe the blissful union. - 46

Mukti means release. Release from phenomenal existence and getting oned with Siva is truly deliverance. A person can attain mukti while yet alive. The person is then known as a jivan-mukta. The jivan-mukta may remain a part of the world; yet he lives apart. "His soul was like a star that dwelt apart." It is thus Wordsworth described Milton.

Even though Pati is immanent in every soul, the soul is either unaware of it or fails to take due note of it. It is because of its nexus with Aanava malam. In fine, in the fettered state, the soul is in advaitic relationship with Aanava malam. Mukti is characterised by the soul's Advaitic union with God.

The soul's beatitude in Mukti

தத்துவங்கள் எல்லாம் சகசமாய் ஆன்மாவில்
பெத்தத்தில் நிற்கின்ற பெற்றிபோல். – முத்திதனில்
சித்தமலம் அற்றார் செறிந்திடுவர் என்றுமறை
சத்தியமா ஓதிமிடும் தான். - 47

Even as all the tattvas stand oned with souls
Which are in the fettered state, so also in Mukti,
The souls that are rid of Aanava mala are oned
With Siva; it is thus the scriptures affirm. - 47

The relationship between Pati and Pasu is indeed ineluctable. The Pati never parts from Pasu. Indeed it cannot. This merciful abidance of Pati in Pasu is thus hailed by St.Maanickavaachakar: "இமைப்பொழுதும் என்நெஞ்சில் நீங்காதான்

தாள் வாழ்க" (Blessed are His feet that part not from my bosom, even for the time the eyes take to wink). However the immanence of God is not effectively felt by the soul. It is not God's abidance in the soul that is Mukti but vice versa.

We have already explained that the soul is what it is attached to. In its fettered state the soul remains attached to Paasam. In Mukti it is attached to the Pati. The attachment is there always. The question is what type of attachment it is. It is attachment which spells bondage as well as liberation. The soul can never remain unattached, though it can detach itself from Paasam. Such detachment attaches the soul to God. The soul gains this salvific attachment eventually by the grace of Grace.

Soul's Non-separation from God

ஆதவன்தன் சந்நிதியில் அம்புலியின் ஆர்சோதி
பேதம் அற நிற்கின்ற பெற்றிபோல் – நாதாந்தத்து
அண்ணல் திருவடியில் ஆன்மா அணைந்து இன்பம்
கண்ணில் அழுந்தியிடும் காண். – 48

The rays of the moon are indistinguishable
From the sun's rays; even so is the mingling
Of the soul with the Feet of the Merciful Lord of Naadaanta.
The soul abides immersed in abounding bliss. - 48

On occasions the rising and the setting of the moon take place during the rising or the setting of the sun. Then the rays of the moon do not cease to be. They mingle with the superior rays of the sun and become indistinguishable. So too in Mukti. The soul merges indistinguishably with Siva. It does not cease to be. It is very much alive. In fact it has gained everlasting life.

Saiva Siddhantam affirms that even in the state of Mukti, pasu is but pasu. It stands pervaded wholly, solely and exclusively by the Pati.

How to construe Mukti?

சென்று இவன்தான் ஒன்றில் சிவபூரணம் சிதையும்
அன்று அவன்தான் ஒன்றும் எனில் அன்னியமாம் – இன்று இரண்டும்
அற்றநிலை எது என்னில் ஆதித்தன் அந்தன்விழிக் – 49
குற்றம் அற நின்றது போல் கொள்க.

If it is said that the soul unites with Siva, it detracts
From the fullness of Siva; if it is said that Siva unites
With the soul, then it means that hitherto they stood parted.
If neither of either is true, how is it to be explained?
The answer is this: When the veiling film of the eye is removed
The light of eye and sunlight mingle and abide.
So too is the inseparable union of soul and God in Mukti.- 49

We have given a paraphrasal and interpretative translation of verse 49, for the better understanding of the reader.

Siva is omnipresent. He pervades all beings and things. This is His fullness, His omnipresent pervasion. Soul and God never stood separated from each other. If it is said that the soul unites with Siva, it is incorrect as it detracts from the fullness of Siva. The soul was always within the pervasion of Siva.

If it is said Siva unites with the soul, it again is incorrect, as it would suggest that Siva stood separated from the soul all along. Siva is always with the soul.

The dilemma presented in verse 49 ceases to be an enigma, when we are presented with a right perception. Let us take the case of a person who suffers from lack of vision owing to a blemish his eyes suffer from. When the veiling film is peeled away from his eyes, the light of his eyes mingles with the light of the sun and he is enabled to see. Here, the person concerned was endowed with light in his eyes. However a film veiled it. When the veiling film is removed, he is able to see. Even so God is always with the soul. However Aanavamala acts as a veiling principle. If it is removed, soul is enabled to see, feel and live with God.

The Three Entities in Mukti

வாக்கு மனம் இறந்த வான் கருணை யாளன் உருத்
தாக்கறவே நிற்கும் தனிமுதல்வா – நீங்காப்
பதியினைப் போல் நித்தம் பசுபாசம் என்றால்
கதியிடத்து மூன்றினையும் காட்டு. – 50

O the unique First One! O merciful One beyond word
And thought who is untouched by phenomenality!
You declared that like the inseparable Pati and Pasu,
Paasam too is imperishable. How are these three
constellated in Mukti? 50

Saiva Siddhantam posits the co-eternality of Pati, Pasu and Paasam. As these are beginningless, they have no end. However, of these the unique Ens is Siva. He is the absolute, perfect Perfection. Siva-Guru is also reckoned as great as Siva. So, he is hailed as 'tani Mutalva' (the unique First One/Lord-God). He indeed is the activiser and governor. But for Him, nothing is.

It is also acknowledged that so long as soul is subject to the pervasion of Paasam (Aanava mala), it cannot gain

deliverance. As Paasam cannot go out of existence and as its presence cannot spell salvation for the soul, the question that naturally arises is this. In Mukti how are the three categories constellated? Again, the state or status of soul in Mukti should be logically explained. Does soul merge with God unidentifiably? In other words, is soul still endowed with its individuality? These are significant questions. Also, we should know the place of Aanava malam in Mukti. Is it still potent to pervert soul?

These difficulties do not arise in Vedantam for it never posited the existence of more things than one. God alone is. Soul too is God. Soul thinks it is not God owing to Avidya (Nescience-breeding Maya). With the dawn of knowledge, soul no longer is deemed as an independent entity. Vedantam also posits that matter is but an emanation of God. So, there is nothing that is other than God. Souls and matter came from God and ultimately merge into God. What ultimately is, is God alone. So, the problems that confront the Saiva Siddhanta concept of Mukti are non est in Vedantam.

It can thus he seen that verse 50 raises questions of profound significance. Verse 51 supplies the answers. However this verse is construed in many ways. It is also felt that the interpretations offered are not satisfactory. It is for this reason the late lamented Kandaiah of Sri Lanka wrote elaborately an excellent article that provides the much-needed clarification. We will provide a translation of the important passages of this article later.

Pati, Pasu and Paasam in Mukti

முத்திதனில் மூன்று முதலும் மொழியக் கேள்;

சுத்த அனுபோகத்தைத் துய்த்தல் அணு; – மெத்தவே

இன்பம் கொடுத்தல் இறை; இத்தை விளைவித்தல் மலம்;
அன்புடனே கண்டு கொள் அப்பா! - 51

Listen to the roles of the three entities in Mukti;
It is soul that experiences pure bliss; it is God
Who confers abounding bliss; it is Aanava mala
That yields it. Do discern this, dear son, in love. - 51

The word used for soul in the above verse is Anu (Atom). The soul is nearly all-pervasive. However its pervasion stood fettered totally in its Kevala state by Aanava mala. In other words, soul stood atomized by Aanava mala. In this state it was totally immersed in nescience. In the Sakala (embodied) state, soul was endowed with parviscience. In the Suddha state (Mukti), soul has come by Gnosis and experiences endless bliss.

It is God who confers bliss on soul and it is soul that enjoys bliss. This dictum is easily understood. The problem arises when it is stated that this experience is caused (yielded) by Aanava mala.

It is well known that Aanava malam had always held the soul in its grip and thus prevented it from tasting bliss. In Mukti, the same Aanava malam causes the soul to experience bliss. How?

As the three entities are eternal, they are there in Mukti too. In this supreme beatitude, the soul does not melt into God to become part of God. It flourishes in Mukti in a sharply conscious state. Otherwise it cannot enjoy bliss. For the purpose of conscious experiencing, the soul should be aware of its individual but not independent life. The individuation is caused by Aanava mala and thus it helps the soul to enjoy perennial bliss. It is thus Tiruvilangkam Pillai

of Sri Lanka explains the role of Aanava malam in Mukti. In Mukti Aanava malam stands totally forfeited of its perversity. Hitherto it acted as a barricade. Now it has become a passage for the flow of bliss. Thus Aanava malam survives in Mukti also, in its metamorphosed state.

In fine, the role of Aanava malam in the fettered state of soul is central and in Mukti, less than nominal. It is present and this presence is as good as its absence. The point is, in Mukti the obstructing force of Aanava mala is done away with. It is of help to the soul by its standing totally denuded of its deflecting power.

The way leading to Mukti

அப்பா இம் முத்திக்கு அழியாத காரணம்தான்
செப்பாய் அருளாலே; செப்பக் கேள் – ஒப்பில்
குரு லிங்க வேடம் எனக் கூறில் இவை கொண்டார் – 52
கரு ஒன்றி நில்லார்கள் காண்.

O Father, do tell me in grace of the unfailing way
Leading to Mukti. Well, hearken to me.
Guru, Lingam and Jangamam are the shrines.
They that cherish these are freed from re-birth. - 52

Guru is Siva-Guru. He is the one who initiates the aspirant, guides him and eventually causes him to gain salvation.

Lingam is that which is installed in the sanctum sanctorum of Siva's shrine. It is the symbol par excellence of Siva which is to be deemed and adored as Siva Himself. Jangamam are the devotees / servitors of Siva. They are known as mobile shrines.

Siva radiantly abides in Taavaram as well as Jangamam. Taavaram refers to that which is stationary. Here it pointedly refers to the icon/idol of Siva.

Jangamam refers to all that move. Here, the reference is to devotees/servitors of Siva. These are referred to as Atiyaar. Ati means Foot / Feet (of Siva). Atiyaar have their being in the Feet of Siva. The Lord's feet symbolise grace eternal.

The threefold worship commanded here is the sure way to Mukti. Even when the devotee becomes a jivan-mukta, he must cherish these. The twelfth and concluding sutra of the Sivagnaana Bhotham lays special emphasis on such worship.

St. Sundarar celebrated the greatness of Atiyaar in his salvific hymn called the Tiru-th-Thonda-th-Tokai. The Periya Puranam which is Applied Saiva Siddhanta is but an amplified version of St. Sundarar's hymn.

Jivan-Mukta

கற்றா மனம் போல் கசிந்து கசிந்தே உருகி
உற்றாசான் லிங்கம் உயர்வேடம் - பற்றாக
முத்தித் தலைவர் முழுமலத்தை மோசிக்கும்
பத்திதனில் நின்றிடுவர் பார். - 53

The jivan-muktas when they behold Guru, Lingam
And devotees that wear the salvific symbols, will melt
And melt like the cow for its tender calf. The liberated
Stand poised in bhakti that totally annuls the malas. 53

We repeatedly affirm Guru is Siva-Guru. Before the sakalas, at the hour ordained, Siva Himself manifests. More

often, He chooses a guru and acts through him. So it is, the guru is hailed as Siva-Guru. This guru is a jivan-mukta who stands freed from malas.

Even though malas are vanquished, their impressions still continue to abide in the liberated chela. It is therefore necessary for the aspirant/chela/devotee, to be ever aware of the salvific feet of the guru. He should also chant the mystic pentad as ordained by the Guru.

Siva has a form, has no form and also has a formless form. His formlessness is beyond the ken of human comprehension. In this, His state, He is known as Sivam. Siva is God and Sivam is Godhead.

Siva assumes a formless form which is flame-like. This formless form does not possess any limbs like face, hands and the like. This is His form of light, truly speaking. He is now known as Sadaasivam. This is represented by the Lingam in the sanctum sanctorum of the shrine. Lingam means mark/symbol. In His formlessness Sivam is invisible. In His formless form, He is visible.

Siva also has a form which is represented by His icons/idols. These are reckoned, as twenty five and also as sixty-four. The Aagamas speak of such forms. They constitute the sacred sculpture. It is from His formless form, His forms emerge.

Jivan-muktas are devotees who have their being in Siva. These are to be adored as Siva Himself. So it is, the supreme status is accorded to the Naayanmaar. The hagiography relating to these Naayanmaar is the Periya Puranam of St. Sekkhizhaar. This work is the peak of the

Tirumurais which should be cultivated with care, devotion and veneration.

Gracias

வாழ்ந்தேன் அருட்கடலே வற்றாப் பவக்கடலில்
வீழ்ந்தே அலையாமல் மேதினியில் – சூழ்ந்து விடா
வெண்ணைச் சுவேதவன மெய்கண்ட நாதனே
உண்மைத் தவப்பயனே உற்று. - 54

No more falling into the endless sea of embodied life
And getting tossed about, I flourish redeemed.
O Meikanda Deva of Vennainallur and Vennkaadu
Who holds me never forsaking! I have gained the fruit of
true tapas. - 54

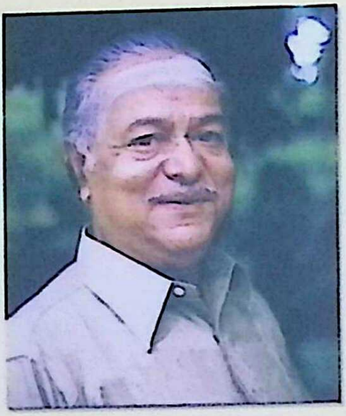
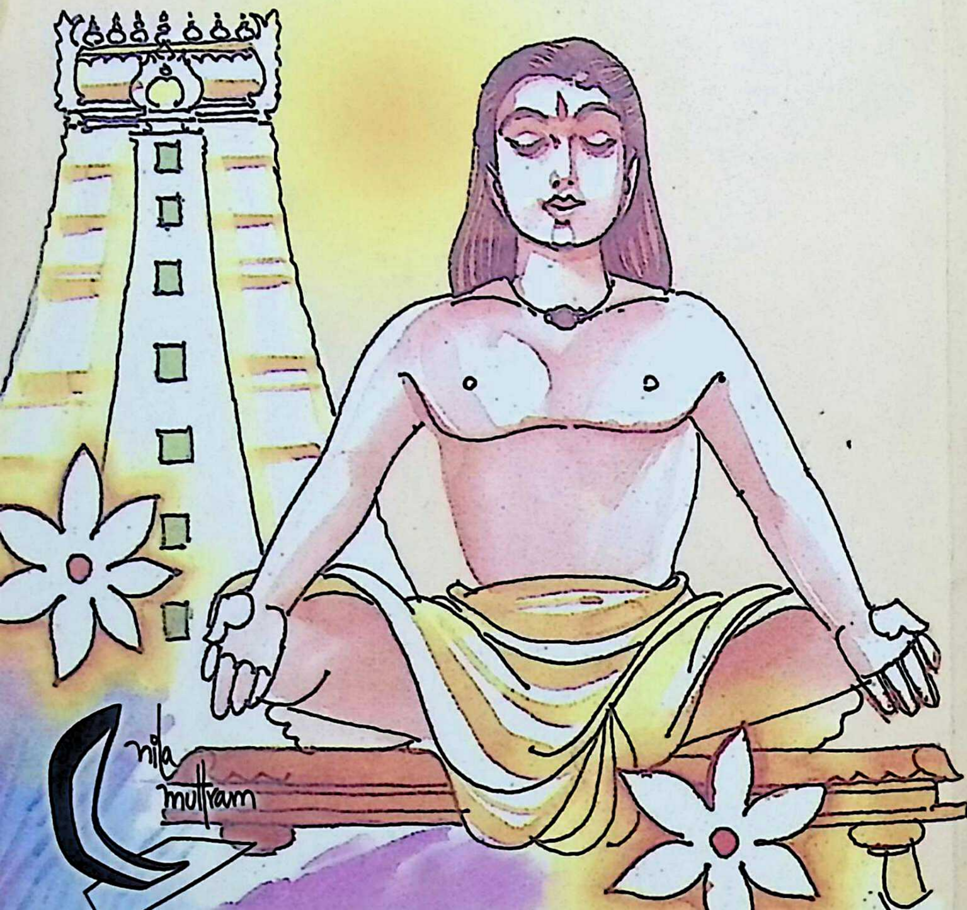
Saint Meykandaar was christened Suvedavanan. Suvedavanam is known as Vennkaadu. He abode at Vennainallur and propagated Saiva Siddhanta. St.Paranjyoti initiated him into Saiva Siddhanta and named him after his own guru Satyagnaana Darshani which in Tamil is translated as Meikandaar.

The disciple overflows with gratitude for his guru and expresses it in the concluding verse of his work. He says he has gained his guru and that indeed is gaining the fruit of true tapas. Tapas in Saiva Siddhantam refers to the spiritual journey which takes the aspirant through charya, kriya and yoga to Gnaanam (Gnosis / Godly knowledge). It is thus life stands fulfilled and lasts for ever.

The Unmai Vilakkam is the Saivite's manual. Having studied it with care, the aspirant should live in conformity with its salvific precepts. His entire life is to be reckoned as selfless service to Siva.

உண்மை விளக்கம்

செய்யுள் முதல் குறிப்பு	பக்கம்	செய்யுள் முதல் குறிப்பு	பக்கம்
அந்தி	9	சிவன்	73
அப்பா	84	சென்று	80
அன்றியும்	60	சேர்க்கும்	64
அக்கிரங்கட்கு	60	நன்றா	56
அஞ்செழுத்தே	77	நன்றாக	39
அந்தக்கரணம்	17	நற்றவத்தோர்	62
அண்ணல்	74	நாதாந்தே	71
ஆறு	58	நாற்கோணம்	29
ஆறாது	10, 56	தத்துவங்கள்	57
ஆறாது தத்துவமும்	55	தத்தவங்கள் எல்லாம்	76
ஆடும்படி	64	தோற்றம்	66
ஆதி	77	பொய்காட்டிப்	9
ஆதவன்தன்	79	பொன்பார்	30
உள்ளபடி	14, 36	பாராதி	31
உற்ற குறி	73	படைப்பன்	31
எல்லை	50	பரை	70
எட்டும்	63	மண்	35
ஒன்றென்ற	61	மாயைதனை	67
ஓங்காரமே	65	முத்திதனை	75
ஓதியிடும்	44	முத்திதனில்	82
கண்ணுதல்	41	மோனந்த	69
கற்றா	59	வண்மைதரும்	8
காலம்	49	வான்	39
குறி	31	வாக்கு	41
குன்றா	59	வாழ்ந்தேன்	87
ஞானேந்திரியங்கள்	37	வித்தியா	55
சுத்த	55		



Sekkizhaar Adi - p - Podi Dr. T.N. Ramachandran, D. Litt., is an acknowledged cognoscente of Saiva Siddhantam. He has indited, edited and translated, in all, fifty works so far. His knowledge of Tamil and English is the envy of scholars. He is devoted to Tamil and Tamil Saivisam and his devotion is worthy of our emulation.